SEPTEMBER 1976

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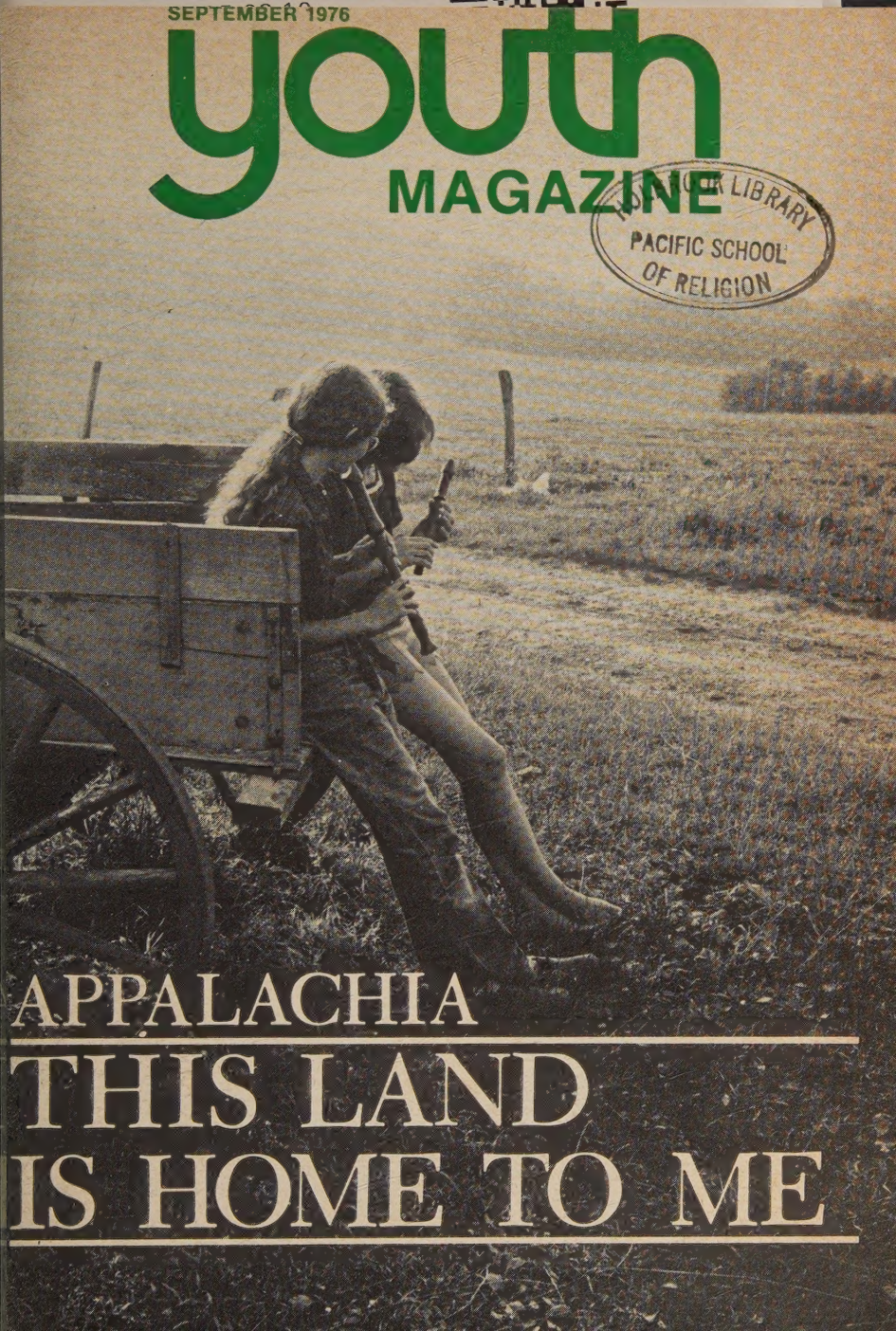

APPALACHIA

THIS LAND IS HOME TO ME

youth magazine

SEPTEMBER 1976, VOL. 27, NO. 9

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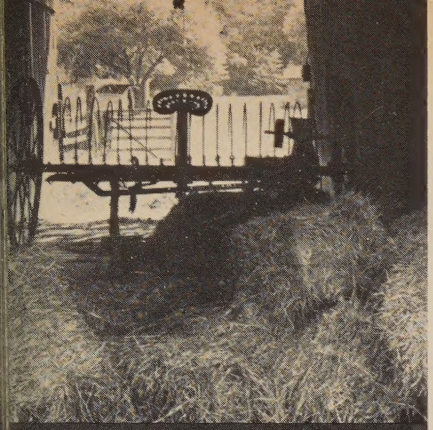
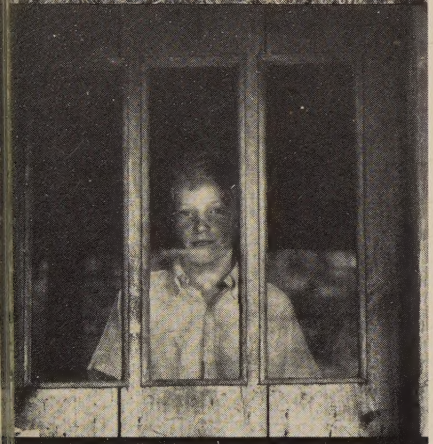
What's the last frontier to be discovered in the United States? What is considered by some to be the largest U.S. colony? What area produces 70 percent of the coal consumed in the U.S., provides 15 percent of the nation's energy, and has reserves to last for several hundred years? Why is this area so rich in resources but full of poverty? What is there about the life style of this region that holds its own people home and makes it the envy of outsiders?

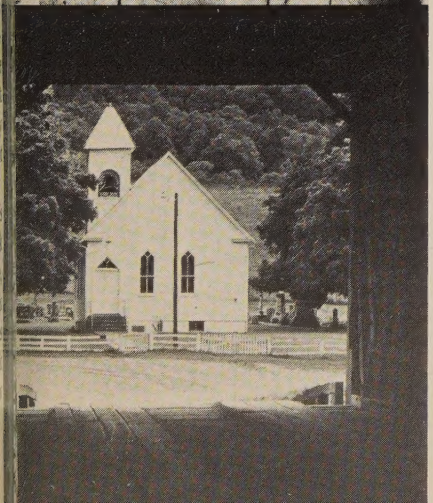
Of course, we're talking about a section of the U.S. known as Appalachia.

And a group of Episcopal young people who live in Appalachia have requested us to do this special issue. They are members of the Youth Area of Concern of the Appalachian People's Service Organization, Inc. (YAC-APSO). They wanted the readers of YOUTH Magazine to know more about Appalachia, the humanity of its people, the seriousness of its problems, what the churches are doing there, and what you can do. YAC-APSO not only provided us with consultants but also with special funding.

What follows on these pages is only a beginning effort to spark your awareness, your conscience, and your response to a complex situation. Opinions differ on causes of problems and suggestions for solutions. But we invite you to know Appalachia better.







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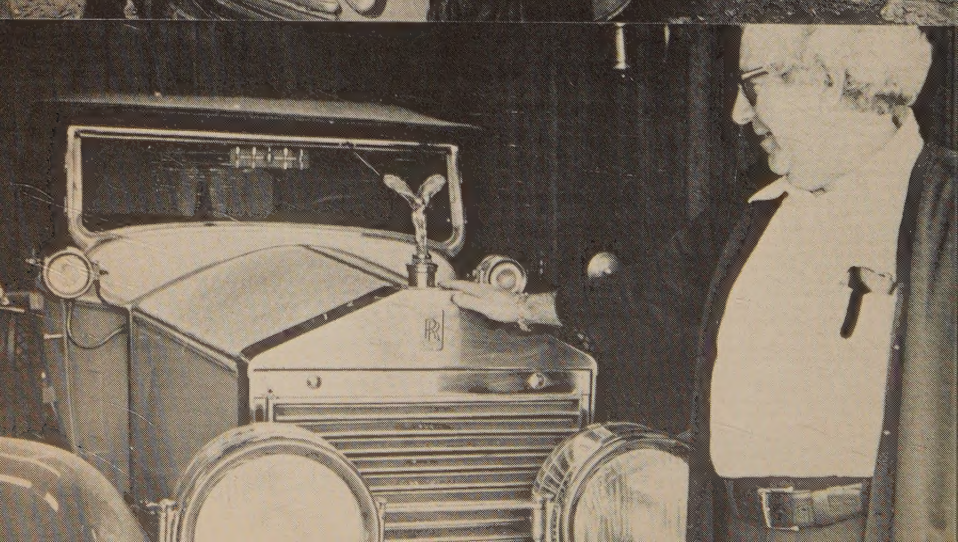


THE PEOPLE OF APPALACHIA

BY JACK WELLER

If you picture the people of Appalachia as being like "Lil Abner" or the "Beverly Hillbillies," scratch those images from your mind. Too many people already imagine the typical mountaineer as a gangling barefoot boy with straw between his teeth, a jug of moonshine on one arm, and a blunderbus on the other, whose home is a shack way back in the hills, whose family has 15 to 20 people in it, and lives in poverty, yet doesn't really want anything better.

You know, it is always easier to dismiss people from your concern if you can make caricatures of them and if you don't have to think of

---

The Rev. Jack Weller, is a Southern Presbyterian clergyman, who has spent his entire ministry in Eastern Kentucky, and lectures at the Appalachian Regional School for church leaders each summer in Morgantown, W. Va.

them as real human beings.

Who are these Appalachians?

The Appalachian Chain itself runs from Canada to Mississippi. It is the oldest mountain range in the Americas (perhaps in the world) and it is the very spine of the Eastern U.S.A.—Pittsburgh, Birmingham, Oak Ridge, Huntsville, Knoxville, for example.

Like anywhere else, each Appalachian person is a unique human being. And when you look at categories of people, the region has all kinds—rich and poor, illiterates and scholars, rural and urban, coal miners and farmers, atomic scientists and school teachers, black and white and red and brown, English and Scottish and Polish and German, the sophisticated and the naive—all kinds of human beings.

To describe the "typical" Appalachian person would be like trying to describe the "typical" midwesterner, or the "typical" student in your school. No matter what you'd say, people would respond, "Hey, that doesn't describe me!"

Appalachia is a land of astonishing contrasts—new super highways and old roads in the creek beds; split-level homes and board shacks; old ballads and the top 40; old English verbs and modern slang. There are still too many poor people there, yet there are also probably more millionaires per square inch in Appalachia, at least in the coal fields, than anywhere in the U.S., except in Texas oil fields.

While people in the towns and cities and the youth of the mountains tend to be much like middle Americans anywhere, in the more isolated areas, a traditional culture is more likely to exist. Actually, Appalachian culture pretty much resembles the vanishing life style of rural people anywhere in America, since Appalachia is largely rural.

When I use the word "culture," I mean the style of life of a people. It is the set of values and behaviors which represents to them the best way to live within the circumstances of life in their society. It is their survival strategies, which enable them and their children to live as best they can while still holding on to the heritage of religion, family, and community which they have developed and been given. Thus, culture is formed in response to life, in response to the kind of land people live in (desert, mountains, snow, etc.), the kind of economic system they have (farming, mining, industrial, nomadic), the tragedies which befall them (earthquakes, typhoons, mine disasters), and such things as this.

All of these factors interacting with each other form a people's culture. When the circumstances of life which formed the culture are altered, the culture begins to change. As the conditions which formed the Appalachian culture began to disappear, the culture began to change.

Mountain people hold pretty

"APPALACHIA HAS ALL KINDS–RICH AND POOR, RURAL AND URBAN, MINERS AND FARMERS, SOPHISTICATED AND NAIVE."

much the same values as others in our society, but they may put these values in a somewhat different order of importance. Let's look at some of the characteristics of this Appalachian culture, remembering that the more isolated the area, the stronger these characteristics.

People in the mainstream of U.S. society tend to be achievers. They talk about "getting somewhere," "doing something," or "accomplishing goals." Thus life is spent planning and working to get to the top (whatever that is), or making a certain level of income, or driving a Jaguar. To them, this is what life is. Mountain people, however, tend to be relational. That is, their main goal is relating with people, especially family. Some described this characteristic as personalism.

Many mountain people want to be friendly and neighborly. They want to help you, if you need it. They want to talk with you and get to know you, even if you are a stranger. For example, everytime I have been stuck in my car, or had a flat tire, or an engine failure along the road, several people always stop to help, people whom I did not even know. This is a human quality in fairly short supply in most of our land these days. The oft-mentioned suspicious nature of the mountain people is misunderstood. They are wary of those whom they suspect have "come to do them good." They have been "done good to" too often!

Many American families today are separated and spread all over the nation, with little contact with relatives. Friends are chosen from among the people where one happens to live. For mountain people, however, the family is still quite central in their lives. Appalachian families have a tendency to be close and caring.

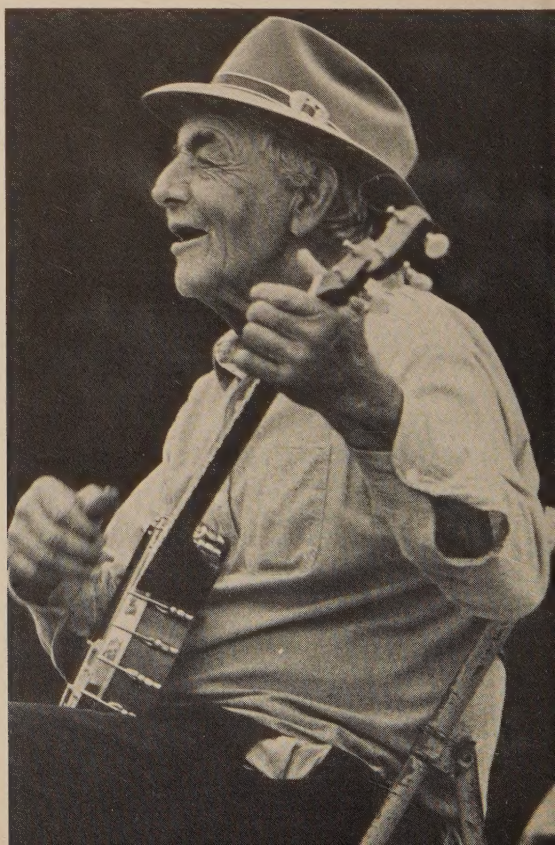
The past several decades have brought great trauma to Appalachian family values, as the people have been forced to become refugees from the mountains into the cities to find work. To meet this crisis of the breaking of these close family ties, in many cities mountain people cluster in certain sections in an attempt to recreate there the life of closeness which they prize. On weekends or holidays the roads from the cities into the mountains are crowded as mountain people return to the hills to be with their families again. As close family ties are fast disappearing from our American life, is it any wonder that many Appalachians fear losing something so precious?

People in the mountains have a great attachment to the land—not

just some piece of land somewhere, but the place where they live. Many families have lived on the same land since the late 1700's. There is something about the mountains which fosters this love of place. The mountains are beautiful and awesome. There is a mystery here, a silent majesty that defies understanding. The mountains have moods, and you cannot look at them twice and see them in the same way. They surround you, protectingly. This hollow is yours—your kin live here. You love this place and y don't ever want to leave it for jangling concrete city or the lands that have no boundaries

"IF THEY SEEM WARY OF STRANGERS, MOUNTAIN PEOPLE HAVE BEEN 'DONE GOOD TO' TOO OFTEN

Many mountain people enjoy time-honored traditions, such as music-making.



Bob Krueger

The solitude and beauty of the countryside contribute to the quality of the music which originates there.

your sight.

The mobility of modern America militates against the mountain person's attachment to the land. During the decades of the 40's through the 60's, two and one-half million Appalachians were forced to move into the cities to find work. For Americans caught up in achievement, moving to a better or more

responsible job is almost always considered a positive value. It is such an accepted thing in our society that we fail to understand that it is a deep tragedy for mountain people, for moving away from the hills, even for a better job, destroys their values of place, family and relationships with their own people.

Americans also tend to be "thing" oriented. They spend their lives working for material goods—the "secret" to happiness and fulfillment. (TV ads even blatantly champion this!) We want the latest model to replace the old, gadgets to manipulate, pleasures to buy and comforts to enjoy, as if the measure of success is how much stuff we have managed to accumulate. Among mountain people, there is less of this mad rush for things. One finds a refreshing unconcern toward worldly goods and comforts. They are often more satisfied with what they have, although modern communication is rapidly gnawing away at this characteristic.

Our family car had just been repaired by a small garage owner in a mountain town. As I laid the money on the counter, he took his hand and just pushed the money aside lightly. "I don't want that stuff," he said. "Just enough to live on, 'cause I know you have to live, too." He really meant that. He was not going to charge me more than he needed to. If I had taken my car to the city for repairing, they would probably have charged me all the traffic would bear because, frankly, they intend to get rich off people like me. Being satisfied with what you have is strange in our land, where we are always being badgered to be dissatisfied into wanting more, more, more. I don't want to overstate the strength of this characteristic in the mountains, but only to say that it exists in many people.

In the mad rush for goods and advancement, America has become a very competitive society. Our whole way of life is geared to working against each other—for grades in school, for economic advantage, for advancement—even children in the same family are in competition with each other. In a personalistic society such as the mountains, excessive competition is thought to be unseemly. These are your friends and neighbors. You learn to work with them, not against them. Thus there has developed in the mountains a much more friendly and cooperative spirit than is often found elsewhere in society.

Studies have found that a number of men refuse the offer to be made foremen in the mines, not wanting to be "over" their fellows in a supervisory capacity. Part of this reluctance comes from a basic modesty of mountain people about themselves. The mountaineer believes he is as good as anyone else, but no better. This feeling, coupled with his tendency to be satisfied with whatever fate deals him,

"IN APPALACHIA, THESE ARE YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS; YOU WORK WITH THEM, NOT AGAINST THEM."

makes him a fairly noncompetitive person. Our dominant society sees the mountaineer as a non-achiever when it comes to "success." Judge for yourself which value (competition or non-competition) is better for the human community.

A city industrialist was complaining. It seems that a young man from the mountains had come to work for him and had done an excellent job. He was called in and offered an advancement in the company and a raise. The boy refused. The employer was aghast, especially when the boy gave his reason for refusing—"I like what I'm doing now." You see, that kind of attitude is almost un-American. Again, I do not want to overemphasize this characteristic, but it is there.

One of the problems of this non-competitive spirit, and the sense of modesty about oneself, is that often leadership in the mountains is hard to come by. People do assume leadership by virtue of their abilities, but it is more often a passive acceptance and not a deliberate seeking.

Mountain people tend to be fairly independent. For generations they have had to make the best of life, being doctor, dentist, furniture-maker, and whatever else was required. (Obviously, I am not talking about town and city folk in Appalachia, but rural people who tend most to show the characteristics I'm speaking about.) There were few with special expertise to provide services in the remote vastness of the mountains. So people found herbs to doctor themselves, made toys to amuse their children, and sewed quilts to keep themselves warm through the snowy winters.

While today there are doctors and hospitals and stores available, the independent spirit still remains in many of the people. Americans verbally admire the independent person, and so, in that regard, the mountaineer is a 110 percent "true blue" American. Actually, however, Americans do not live as independent spirits as much as they talk. We are team people. We seldom do things alone, but like to do what everybody else does. We follow the current fads in sports, clothes, records, etc. The mountaineer, however, is an independent individual who pretty much goes his own way undaunted by what the community thinks. In the mountains, one visitor noted, the individual seems to stand above the community. This attribute also goes directly counter to the lock-step tendency of mainstream culture. But don't

knock it—it has some strengths.

Mountain people generally are quite religious. They have a deep love for God, and I have never met an atheist. The culture of the people is intertwined with their faith. Their faith is "the old-time religion" passed down from frontier life a century or more ago. In the beginning, when the first settlers came to the mountains, they brought with them the Presbyterianism or Episcopalianism or other formally organized churchmanship from the old country. In the isolation of the mountains, however, trained clergy were not to be found, so locally autonomous sects grew up and

"CULTURE IS FORMED IN RESPONSE TO LIFE, TO LAND WHERE PEOPLE LIVE AND TO THEIR ECONOMIC SITUATION."

A sheep farmer shears one of his flock.

Farming and mining are the two major occupations of mountain folk.

Kenneth Murray

predominated, as they do today.

In the area where I live and work (Eastern Kentucky) the denominations which produce this magazine (look on page 2 for the list) represent less than two percent of the population, and some of them don't even exist here. This does not mean the people are unchurched. It means they belong mostly to groups such as Old Regular Baptist, Church of God (many varieties), Pentecostal and Holiness groups and not mainline denominations. Many of these are small, local congregations served by lay preachers who earn their living in secular employment. With the region so divided by mountains and with no public transportation systems in this vast, densely populated rural area, churches are found at almost every bend in the river. In one county here, there are 440 preachers serving churches, but only six of them have had the college and seminary training which most denominations require.

Frequently, mountain communities are closely-knit by virtue of family ties and common interest in preserving their unique traditions.

"RECENT DECADES HAVE DISRUPTED FAMILY VALUES WHEN KIN ARE FORCED TO MOVE ELSEWHERE TO WORK."

The religion of the mountains, like the culture itself, tends to be very personalistic and individualistic. Life on the frontier was hard. Therefore, religion needed to be a very personal thing which helped mountain people sustain themselves. It stressed a personal morality, virtue and honor, for life was a personal matter, not a community function. Because life's rewards were so often few or unsure, religion stressed the rewards of the life to come. These characteristics are still very strong among many Appalachians, but not all.

Fatalism is often mentioned as a characteristic of many of the people, too. There is a tendency to accept "what the Lord sends." Coal miners live with the belief that "when their time is up" they will be taken wherever they are, and so find strength to face the dangers of their underground tasks day after day. A fatalistic philosophy, undergirded by religious belief, had been a cushion of hope against the senseless tragedies of life.

The recent disaster in the Scotia, Ky., mine is a good example. With all the safety laws on the books, both federal and state, with all the new technology available for mine safety and all the recent emphasis on the matter, people must ask, "Where is the sense to the snuffing out of 26 lives in a gas explosion?" When such disasters occur again and again, the people cannot live believing that it makes no sense to die. "We can't control these things," mountain people will say. "It must be God's good hand in it. We will accept them as such." This reasoning may not sound too attractive to you, but at least the people are spared either a hopelessness in the face of tragedy, or a guilt that they might have been responsible. "Their time was up." To these mountain people, the good God above is still in control.

Let me repeat, these characteristics are not true of *all* Appalachians, especially not so of the more urbanized and the less isolated. And this traditional culture does not eliminate many problems for these Appalachians, for, as some would say, it even causes many problems.

But who is to say that the mainstream American culture itself does not have and cause problems? Yet, one cannot help but admire, as many American youth do, the virtues of the values and the life style of mountain people. Indeed, the people of Appalachia may be the "people of tomorrow." □

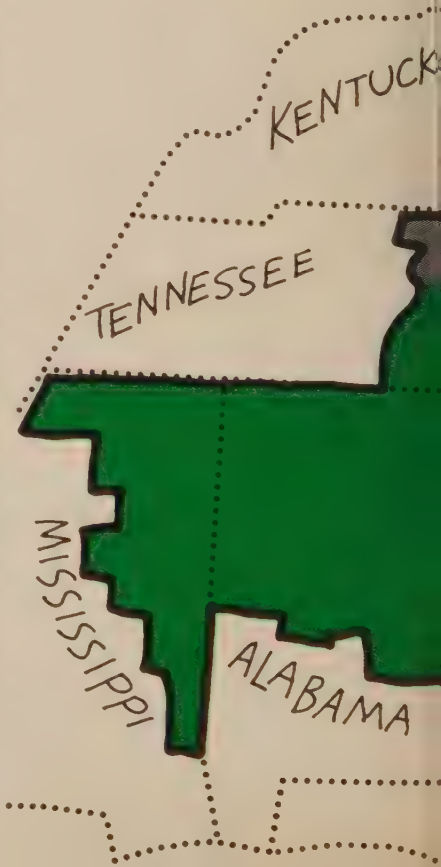
APPALACHIA

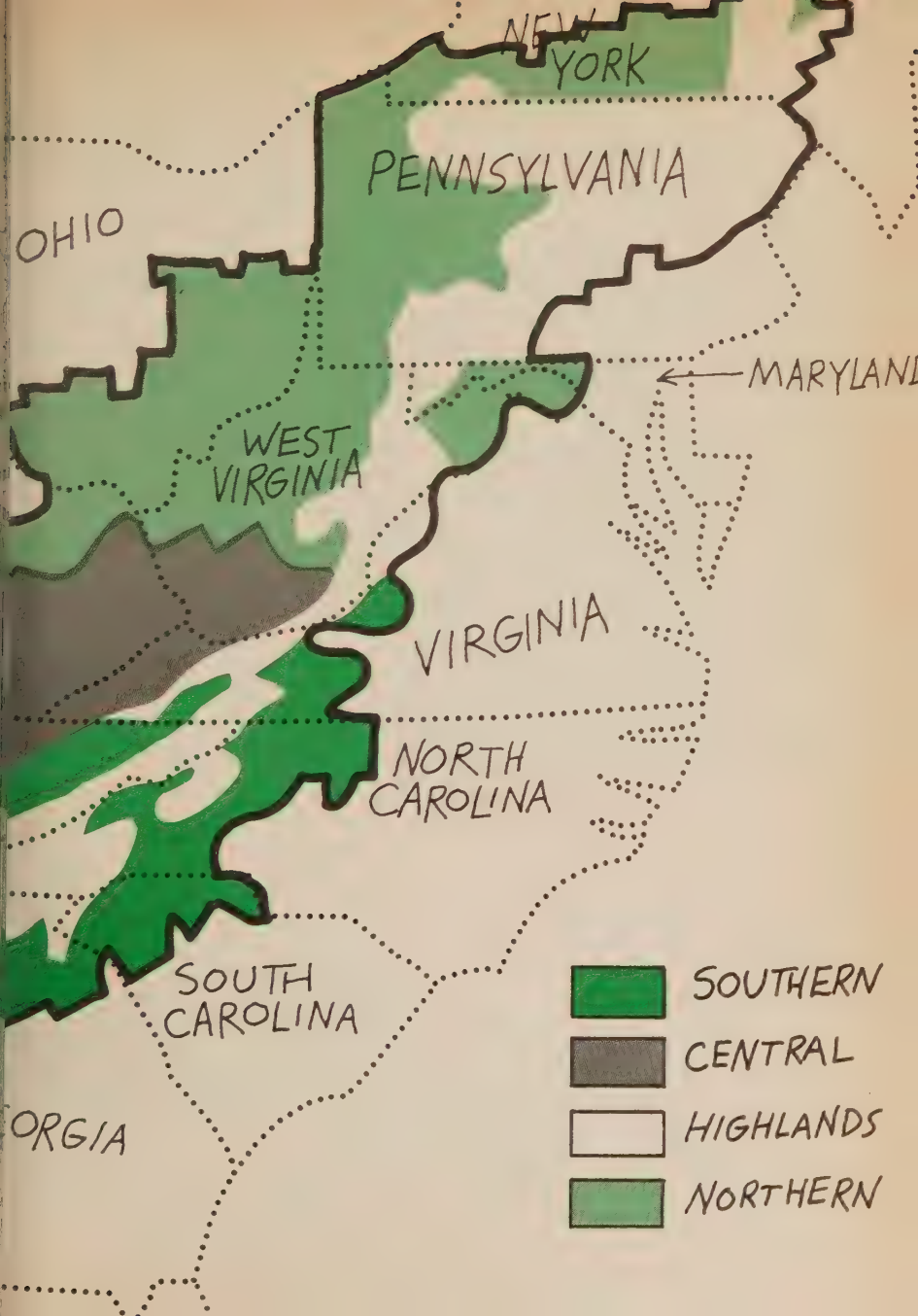
There are many geographical definitions of "Appalachia," but the one that is most "legal" is defined by the federal agency, Appalachian Regional Commission, as shown here. Its boundaries follow county lines, not state lines.

The location of natural resources, the variety of cultures, the economic potentials, and the human problems of Appalachia overlap the various areas, but generally they fall into the following four:

The *Southern* area is where industrialization and urbanization is most rapidly occurring, converting the old agricultural economy into a new industrial one. The *Central* area is faced by an accelerating urbanization, if adequate services and employment opportunities are developed for the million and a half people who live in that area. The *Highlands* area stretches nearly the length of Appalachia along the "higher lands" and it is in this area that most of the recreation and tourism development is taking place. The *Northern* area (southern edge of Ohio, most of West Virginia, and western Pennsylvania) faces problems related to the transition from dependence on a coal-steel-railroad economy to new types of manufacturing and employment.

Appalachia is a land of contrasts—rural and urban, industrial and agricultural, mountains and valleys and plains.

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HIGHLANDS
NORTHERN

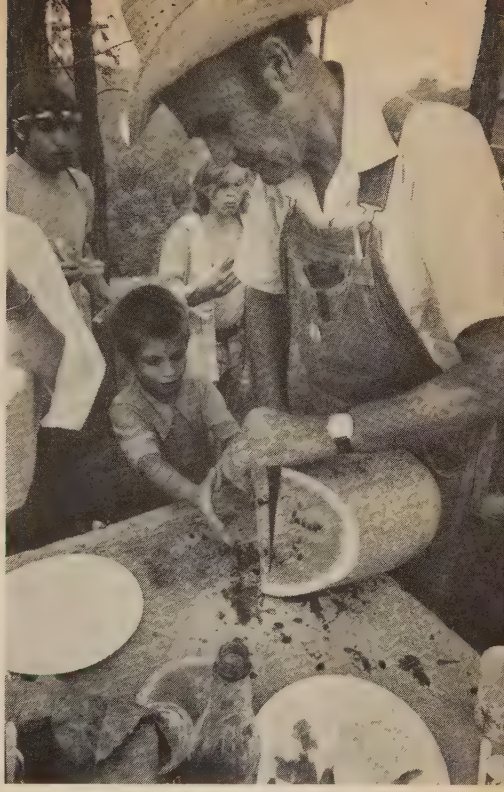
At the Appalachian South Folklife Center summer campers eat a hearty meal.

INTERVIEW AND PHOTOS BY BOB KRUEGER

"Mine is a real old Southern family," writes Don West in the foreword to his collected poems, *O Mountaineers!*. "Oh, I'm no sprig off the decadent tree of some bourbon, aristocratic, blue-blood family of the notorious slave-master tradition . . . I'm more Southern than that. That represents only a small minority. My folks were the men who wore jeans pants and the women who wore linsey petticoats. They had nothing to do with the gentee tradition. Some were the first white settlers of Georgia, and some were already settled when the white ones came." *

*From *O Mountaineers!*, by Don West, © 1974, Appalachian Press, used by permission.

FOLK CENTER TEACHES CULTURAL PRIDE



Don West carves a watermelon for eager kids during a picnic.

Don West speaks proudly of his olonial and Cherokee ancestors, nd demonstrates a deep sense of ride in the hard-working mountain ock from which he comes in his oetry, and in his life. He has long een a spokesperson for the ppalachian mountaineer, and vi- lly concerned with the quality of ountain life.

A native of the North Georgia hill ountry, Don graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1930 with degrees in education and divinity. Then he traveled to Denmark on a scholarship to study the folk schools and co-operative movements there. Upon his return to this country in 1933, he was one of those who started the Highlander Folk School in Mount Eagle, Tenn., to deal with

Robert Krueger, is a photojournalist from Aspen, Colo., whose works appear nationally.

cultural exchange and the social problems of the mountain people.

It was the beginning of a long career of social activism and commitment to social change in the mountains. During the 30's, when paid thugs roamed the coal-mining towns, sometimes shooting down protesters in cold blood, Don was a union organizer. He remembers that later, "while I was at the Highlander School, I read about a young black man being sentenced to 20 years on a Georgia chain gang. I hitch-hiked down to Atlanta and became involved in the defense of this young man. A few years later, the Supreme Court invalidated the law under which this young man was convicted." Years of work at union organizing, and as a Congregational minister, teacher and school superintendent followed.

"In 1946 I became a professor at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta," Don recalls, "And I was there for three years before I was fired—along with my wife, Connie, wh was teaching art in the local scho system—because of my 'controve sial activities.'"

Don's "controversial activitie included an active part in th defense appeal of a black woma and her two children who had bee sentenced to death in the electr chair for shooting a white man wh had attempted to rape the woma after breaking into her home.

"This was in 1948," continue Don. "The Klu Klux Klan was ver strong around Atlanta. Toda Atlanta is a different story, but the it was inevitable that I should hav been fired. After that incident I wa subpoenaed by Senator Eastlan of Mississippi, to appear before th Senate Committee on Interna Security for an investigation of m patriotism."

With this type of background, it not surprising that Don's work ha

A MINI-COURSE IN APPALACHIAN HISTORY

☐ Appalachia was originally settled, largely, by Scottish, English, and Irish immigrants searching for religious and political freedom.

☐ The first constitution for self-government in the New World was adopted in the Appalachian South.

☐ The abolishionist movement began in the Appalachian mountains.

☐ West Virginia was formed in 1863 by seceding from Virginia over the slavery issue.

☐ During the Civil War, many areas in Appalachia seceded from the Confederacy over slavery: this included a number of counties in north Georgia and Alabama, as well as most of east Tennessee.

☐ Many of the stops in the Underground Railroad were in the barns and homes of the Appalachian mountaineers.

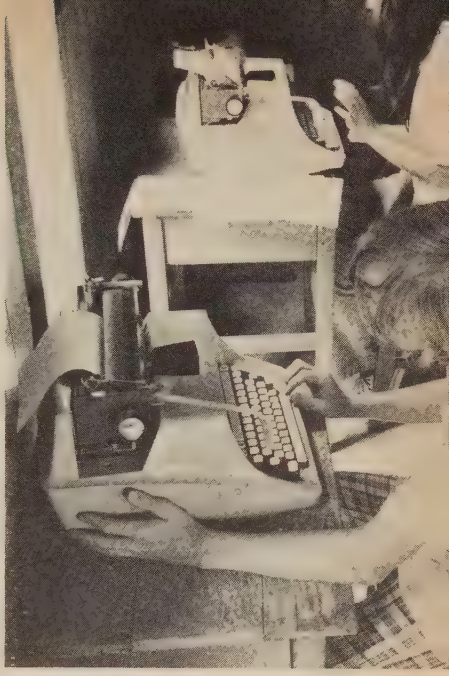
☐ The beginnings, and some of the most violent battles of the trade union movement were in the cotton mills and the coal fields of Appalachia.

"WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE BELIEF THAT POOR PEOPLE ARE NOT ALWAYS STUPID OR INFERIOR."

been connected with the civil rights movement. "We Shall Not Be Moved," a song he wrote, was originally sung in the coal camps of Eastern Kentucky, and later used by civil rights workers.

From 1949 until 1964, both of the Wests taught in various school systems, and planned and saved for what has become the realization of a life-long dream. By putting aside a portion of their incomes each year, they were eventually able to accumulate enough capital to purchase 600 acres in Summers County outside of Pipestem, W.Va., and to begin building (mostly with volunteer labor) an Appalachian studies center known as the Appalachian South Folklife Center.

A folk school, as Don learned while in Denmark in his earlier years, is a place where the knowledge and spirit of people would be united through the living word spoken from the heart, as well as from the mind. Experiences and skills, as well as cultural history and mythology are seen as important methods of transmitting culture from one generation to the next.



Young people learn to type while studying at the Folklife Center.

Of the Appalachian South Folklife Center, Don says, "We are committed to the belief that poor people are not always stupid people; are not always inferior people. We believe that in Appalachia we have a very rich culture and heritage that our people ought to know about, and we're striving to help them become aware of this heritage. We have been hillbillyized for so long, with ugly images projected by the media that it has affected our own feeling towards ourselves. For awhile mountain people became ashamed to be identified as hillbillies, as mountain people. We're

Traditional mountain crafts, such as weaving, are a part of the curriculum.

trying to help mountain people, youth particularly, to be proud of being mountaineers."

The basic program of the center is built around a combination of a summer camp and study program where about 40 students, ages 13-18, live at the center for a three-month period on a. complete scholarship basis. In addition to the standard summer camp type of activities, the students study Appalachian culture and history, both in a classroom environment and on field trips. John Woody, a terminally ill, black-lung-infected miner, and "Granny," an elderly resident whose family sold off the mining rights to her farm in the 20's for six cents an acre (her farm now consists of the homestead surrounded by stripping operations and slag ponds) conduct field trips to local strip-mine operations. Music, including banjo, fiddle, guitar and mandolin are taught by local musicians. Don exposes the students to the literature, poetry and music of the mountains as well as encouraging them to write on their own. Connie West, the camp staff, and local volunteers conduct classes in weaving, art, typing, carpentry. Students are encouraged to find pride and

"WE'VE BEEN HILLBILLYIZED FOR SO LONG, WITH UGLY MEDIA IMAGES, WE'VE BECOME ASHAMED OF OURSELVES."

encouragement in their history, and are often presented with facts which are not found in the traditional history books.

In addition to its camp program, the Appalachian South Folklife Center provides *Appalachian South Magazine;* a Mountain Museum—filled with portraits of mountain people painted by Connie West, and some Appalachian artifacts and antiques; the Pipestem Folk Festival, an annual event which draws tens of thousands of visitors to the Folklife Center; and the only library in the county, open to all. The summer program is being expanded into a year-round program, including adult seminars. This past year the Folk Festival was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. A few years ago, the Johnny Cash Show wanted to use the Festival as a backdrop for one of their TV shows. Don turned them down, feeling that the presentation would be just another "hey, look at the hillbillies" affair.

Antioch College (where Don is a Trustee and part-time instructor) holds seminars and retreats at the center. And the grounds are open to groups such as the miner's Black Lung Organization, and the Save Our Mountains conservation group. Don sees the facility as eventually becoming a community center for all types of social and cultural concerns to Appalachian residents.

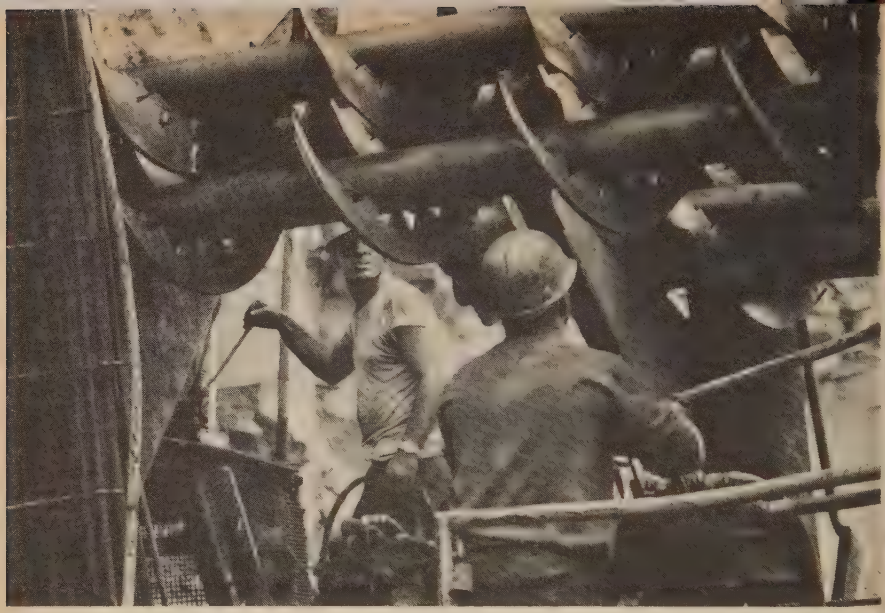
A poem Don wrote in 1940, "Home-coming," * was a prophetic summation of his work:

And I've come back to you.
Mountain earth—
Come to laugh
And sorrow
And sing—
To dig my songs up
From your soil
And spin a melody
Of corn blades,
Top-fodder,
Crab-grass,
And a clean-plowed furrow.

I've come to sing and grope—
With a people who know
Deep songs,
Who stumble up
A long crooked road . . .

I've come because
Your great silent agony
Echoed every where
And the weary foot-steps
Of my old Dad
Still sound upon the mountain
Where his sweat dripped down
To water your dirt . . . □

*From *O Mountaineers!*, by Don West, © 1974, Appalachian Press, used by permission.



In the coal-mining areas, mining is almost the singular occupation available to men who need to support themselves and their families.

OUR LAND

BY R. B. LLOYD

Strip-mining is about people.

Brushy Ridge in Dickenson County, Virginia, has for generations been home to countless numbers of people. They lived on her ridges. They lived on her less-steep mountain slopes. They lived in the hollows nestled up under her.

Open Fork Creek was one of these hollows—home to the McCowan family for more than five generations. Life for them was always economically marginal. But to most of the McCowans, life along Open Fork Creek was a joy—they felt rich and blessed, with all their basic needs. "We had a full and whole life together here," said Jim McCowan, the oldest and the leader of today's living McCowans. "God had blessed us well." Jim was a miner and a Free Will Baptist

Jack Corn/Image

Aerial view of a strip-mined area in eastern Tennessee.

IS DYING

preacher.

"You see that creek out there?" he pointed. "There was a time it was so clean and pure you could drink from it. My wife could do her washing in it. But now, since strip-mining has come to our mountains, it isn't fit for a hog to drink from. Why not even a crawdad can live in it. There was a time you could find water anywhere in these hills that was clean and fresh to drink. Now the water is about all gone, and what is left is polluted."

Strip-mining came to Open Fork Creek in 1972. Bryan McCowan, Jim's son, had fought hard, every legal way he knew, to try to stop it. For a while he succeeded in keeping

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The Rev. R. B. Lloyd, is an Episcopal priest, executive director of the Appalachian People's Organization, Inc., Blacksburg, Va., and frequent witness before Congress on strip-mining.

it some distance from his hollow.

"They haven't gotten to us yet. They're over in the hollow along Coon's Creek. But even so, it's a terrible thing. Every time they set off a blast, it shakes your house—even cracks your windows and the plaster on the walls, and sends dishes crashing to the floor from off their shelves. I'll be sitting quietly—then the house will jump and the door will come flying open! It makes you nervous and it scares the children near to death."

"Yes, and that is not all that blasting does," added Rufus McCoy, a miner, schoolteacher and one-term delegate to the Virginia State Legislature. (He lost when running for a second term because he spoke out against strip-mining.) "I live up on top of Brushy Ridge about two miles from here. They're blasting on both sides of the mountain from me. When I'm rocking on the porch and a blast goes off, I can always tell—before I hear the blast. My chair moves across the floor, so powerful is the jolt to my home. Up on the mountain, water's hard to come by. I've gone to a lot of expense to have a well drilled. But strippers blasting 2000 feet away have sunk my water system. I'll have to drill again—at my own expense. You can never prove anything. I go to those who did it. They say, 'It ain't us; it must be them on the other side of the mountain.'"

Tom Austin cut in, "That ain't nothing. Why my wife was cooking

"THE REAL ISSUE WITH STRIP-MINING IS WHAT IT IS DOING TO PEOPLE AND TO THEIR LAND AND ENVIRONMENT."

supper one evening—standing there by the kitchen stove. A blast went off up there on the mountain. A boulder came down crashing through the roof of our home taking her and the kitchen stove right through the floor down under the house.

"The coal company heard about it and bought us a new stove and two pieces of plywood—one piece to patch the ceiling, the other to cover up the hole in the floor."

"Is that all they did?"

"That's all."

"Were you satisfied with that?"

"Certainly not!"

"Didn't you try to get legal help?"

"'Tain't no use; they ain't going to help you none."

"That's right," said Rufus McCoy. "You can go to a lawyer. He'll listen and be courteous to you. But when you're finished telling him your problem, he'll say, 'I'm awfully sorry, but I'm retained by that coal company.' There aren't any lawyers who'll help you against a coal company."

In November, 1972, strip-mining came to Open Fork Creek. All Bryan McCowan's efforts failed

Bob Krueger

elderly resident takes visitors on a tour of what remains of her family farm in West Virginia
ly the original homestead is left standing).

e was so distraught, so depressed, at he pulled out of all activities, thdrew completely into himself. On March 27, 1973, I returned to pen Fork Creek. I was passing rough Dickenson County and urned that Open Fork Creek had oded. Bridges had washed out aving the people in the hollow arooned for three days.

Ironically, those heavy rains fell e same day that I had testified at nate hearings in Washington. The cCowans were among 15 families ho were affected by heavy mud-des and flooding on Open Fork eek and Coon's Creek from strip-ining operations high above on the steep slopes of Brushy Ridge. The road going up Brushy Ridge along Coon's Creek had been blocked by a large landslide. Several homes were flooded and filled two feet with mud.

I was told that folks up Open Fork were badly shaken up. So I went up to see them; this was now ten days after the flooding.

What I witnessed right there in the hollow of Open Fork Creek was an enactment of the whole-tragic drama of the *warfare against the people and their land.* The first person I talked to was Loretta, wife of Bryan McCowan.

"It was raining all day and all

night," she told me. "We were awful nervous; stayed up all night. One of my girls was looking out of the window. It was pouring down rain. Suddenly she let out with a yell. We all went a'running to the window. A huge river of mud was coming gushing down the mountain straight toward us. We were sure lucky—most of it went around back of the house—covered our yard, our garden, everything. We won't have no garden this year!" And to this day—three years later—they still have no garden.

"Another river of mud and rocks would have buried the trailer home of my son, Wayne. His wife was home all alone when it happened. A small knoll above the road made the river of mud split, so it slid around on either side of their trailer."

I asked Loretta where Bryan was.

"He's up on the ridge checking things over."

I looked up the steep mountainside to where the strip-mining operation was—about 700 feet high above the homes of three McCowan households. It is inconceivable that strip-mining is allowed under any such conditions on a slope that must be over 50 or 60 degrees in grade. I know, because I climbed up to that strip-mine operation. Even conservative studies indicate that strip-mining should not occur on slopes above 20 degrees. One study by the government's Appalachian Regional Commission recommends no stripping above a 14-degree slope. T reasons for such regulations a obvious. The spoil off the side that operation hangs menacing over Open Fork Creek. If that sp should break loose there is absolut ly nothing that could save those w live below.

Wayne McCowan, the son Bryan and grandson of Jim M Cowan, says that he is moving h trailer out. He will not risk anoth mudslide. But where is he going move his home? And what guara tee is there that his move will allo him to escape? Or will he suffer th same fate as his parents when the moved back to Open Fork?

Wayne McCowan is young, ma ried, and hopeful of working out living that will enable him continue to live in the mountains the homeland of his ancestors. H wants to raise his family there. B the price of staying is cruel an devastating. As though a final insul since completing high school, th only employment he has been ab to find is to operate a bulldozer on strip-mining job! "I know what it doing to these mountains and to us he explains. "I don't like it a bit! B what am I going to do? I've got t make a living, and I'm not going c welfare!" Men are told that strip mining is the only job there is. Wh they are not told is that a return deep-mining would give three four times as many jobs.

Welfare recipients make up th largest part of roughly 60 percent o

"NO ABLE-BODIED MAN WANTS TO GO ON WELFARE. TO BE A MAN MEANS TO PROVIDE FOR ONE'S FAMILY."

the population of Dickenson County who are on some kind of public assistance. No able-bodied man wants to go on welfare. To be a man means to provide for one's family.

The fact that Wayne is engaged in strip-mining tears the McCowans apart. They know if he is to work and remain in the mountain country, chances are that he could find no other work. Yet, the fact that Wayne's livelihood depends on strip-mining and because kinship loyalty is of primary concern still to most mountain people, the McCowans and other mountain people like them have been unable to organize effective resistance against this frightening enemy.

Finally, I went down to see Jim McCowan, who lives just down the creek from his son and grandson. Jim is truly a mountain gentleman, clearly the strong head of his family clan. He speaks openly and defiantly about the terrible destruction that has come to his hollow. In his 69 years he has known no other home. Like his father, Jim has raised his family on Open Fork Creek. Jim's eyes sparkle as he tells of the good life this once-beautiful hollow offered, ". . . a place where a man could grow up and provide for himself and his family—to know and enjoy a complete life. But now—well, it's destruction everywhere you look. They've made our home a land of waste and terror!"

What Jim and Bryan and Loretta and Wayne McCowan and thousands like them are saying is—what's happening to people because of strip-mining is wrong. It is wicked. That is the real issue.

The media is full of the economic pros and cons of strip-mining, the "energy crisis" and the role of fossil fuels (coal being the most abundant of these resources), and the need to produce more and more energy for more and more technological advancement that benefits fewer and fewer people. Of course, in the scale of values, do the benefits really contribute to a more humane society?

Lost in the debate is what is happening to the people and to the environment in which they live.

Also in this debate there is no consideration of this earth as God's creation and the fulfillment of our human lives having somehow to do with God's intention for all of creation.

There are those today in high places of decision who live as if this earth and its resources belong to the few—the powerful—who control the world and its natural resources. It is as if mankind can develop and

use these resources without any concern for the consequences for present or future generations. All that matters to these people is technological-industrial expansion and the profits that ensure the inflated affluent status of those who have it. The fact that we may destroy the very planet we live on does not seem to matter.

Is all of life to be understood only in economic terms? Is everything to be measured by its commercial value? Has our economic system of profit and progress become our Golden Calf of the 20th century? And is a person's value as a human being to be determined by how much or little he or she contributes to the economic system?

If human beings are created in the image of God, then we would understand that they derive their value, individually and corporately, from God. Our very identity comes from God. Then as we grow and mature as individuals, or as a group, our values become more and more in line with God's will and purpose for creation and our part in relationship to that creation.

Thus, we understand what a great Hopi Indian leader stated so well: "If our lives are in harmony with Mother Earth, we will be blessed. If, however, we abuse or exploit nature and her resources, we will be cursed and we will surely destroy ourselves."

Today there is no more dramatic evidence of man's self-destruction than is witnessed in strip-mining of coal in Appalachia. The underlying drive is for economic gain and power and there is a blindness to the terrible costs we are paying in the lives of people living there and in the destruction of a once self-sustaining nature.

"APPALACHIANS HAVE LONG AGO LOST CONTROL OF THEIR RESOURCES TO FORCES OUTSIDE THE REGION."

It is clear that there is no intention on the part of the coal, oil, steel, utility, railroad industries or federal government officials to support enactment of regulations that would ensure the protection of people and property and the restoration of the land. Quite the contrary, these forces have consistently joined to weaken legislation and block every attempt of Congress to pass even these eroded bills.

People living in Appalachia have long ago lost control of their land and their resources to forces outside of the region. Thus, they have lost control over virtually all decisions that affect their lives. They find themselves voiceless, powerless to stop, much less change, what is happening to them and their land.

In the meantime, it is fairly much "business as usual" for the coal

Helen Winternitz

Human life itself is endangered by the spoil from the strip-mines, which hangs precipitously above on the mountainsides, threatening to slide down in any heavy storm.

operators, with a minimum of governmental interference at either state or federal levels. And lost in the shuffle of power politics are the Jim McCowans of Appalachia—buffeted by the brutal effects of strip-mining on Appalachia's people, their land, and their future.

"I just wish I could get around," a sickly Jim McCowan concluded. "I would go up there on that strip job and put it to them about what they're doing to us down here. I wish I could go to Washington and tell our leaders in Congress what's going on. If they knew—I don't believe they would stand for this to go on happening to people like it is. I would like to tell them so they would understand and put a stop to it. Yes, I would. Now, if you get to go back and to testify again, you be sure to tell them!"

I promised I would. □

LET'S BENEFIT FROM OUR RESOURCES

INTERVIEW BY
JAMES G. BINGHAM

"What's the best possible use of the land?" That's the key question Congressman William C. Wampler of Virginia asks as he considers the controversial subject of strip-mining.

Coming from the only congressional district in Virginia where coal is mined and having more in common with neighboring eastern Kentucky and Tennessee than the rest of his own state, the Republican congressman's "fighting Ninth" district is, nevertheless, not one of the poorer regions of Appalachia. It is not as dependent on coal as southern West Virginia and has benefitted from recent economic development in the valley.

His position on strip-mining is that he thinks it is "compatible that we can have surface mining if we have meaningful reclamation of the

Ron Taylor

Congressman William C. Wampler (R., Va.) believes that many good things are happening in his home district as a result of strip-mining.

land afterward."

"In fact, in my congressional district, I have seen a number of strip-mining projects that have been reclaimed in such a highly satisfactory manner that the land now has a higher economic value than before. For example, we have built airports, schools, shopping centers, a hospital, and home sites. And in those counties where the terrain is so steep, the now level, developable land is at a premium.

"You have to see the bright side," smiles Mr. Wampler. "It is true that during the strip-mining process there is a substantial disruption to the balance in the economy and the ecology, but with the proper standards, which I believe we have in

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The Rev. James G. Bingham, is vicar of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Morganton, N.C., director of communications of the Appalachian People's Service Organization, Inc., and one of the honorary Bicentennial chaplains to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Virginia, this can be held to a minimum."

As background, Mr. Wampler describes how "the seams of coal that are most adaptable to surface mining are the thin seams that are not mineable by deep-mining methods, simply because the geology of the coal does not permit it.

"Much of the devastation that occurred in West Virginia was during the Korean War and immediately afterwards. At that time, the price of coal was quite low and the operators obviously had little margin of profit to put back into meaningful reclamation.

"By the mid-1960's, public awareness brought legislative action in the General Assembly in Virginia. As technology improved, more stringent requirements on reclamation were put into Virginia's Reclamation Law."

Mr. Wampler explains that the U.S. needs a single national coal policy, not the "hodge-podge" it presently has. He discovered the difficulty of writing such a bill that is acceptable to many different situations when he introduced his own National Coal Policy Act. Earlier this year he voted against two bills because they were unduly restrictive to the mining situation in his own district.

He encourages surface mining because the coal is needed to meet our energy demands. And the cost of starting a surface mining operation costs much less than opening up a deep-mining operation.

"Recognizing we have real environmental problems both in mining the coal and in utilizing the coal, I'm not suggesting we abandon our desirable and achievable environmental goals, particularly as it pertains to emission standards. But I think we ought to take a hard look at them to see if perhaps we can't phase them out over a longer period of time and to do some basic research in learning how to use coal better.

"We're already spending a great deal of money on trying to find an economical way both through the process of gasification and liquidification of coal to use it in other forms than what we use it today.

"From my personal observation," says the Virginian, "in a significant number of cases, the land is more valuable after strip-mining because it can now be used for some purpose of development, while before the land had little or marginal use, except for that coal that was underneath the land."

But what about those who feel comfortable with the land in its natural state and prefer it untouched by bulldozers and explosives?

"Of course, this is the classic confrontation in our society today," begins the congressman. "The coal-producing counties I represent have historically been the lowest per capita income in my district com-

"SURFACE MINING IS COMPATIBLE IF WE HAVE MEANINGFUL RECLAMATION OF STRIPPED LAND."

pared, for example, to an agricultural county or one that is more industrialized. So we're simply utilizing the resources we have, we're mining the coal, reclaiming the land, and putting the land to greater use, thereby creating more of a tax base and generating income and employment opportunities. This is not true in every case, but I've seen this myself.

"Land should serve people to the best possible use. Although I don't question their right to feel this way and many are sincere and well-motivated, there are those who feel we should have a zero growth in this country—we should develop no more land, we should build no more highways, we should stop right where we are. I think that's a highly idealistic point of view but not a very practical one, because I think we must continue to find meaningful employment opportunities for our people.

"One thing that the mining industry has done for Virginia is to help stop the out-migration of young people. People are now coming back to the coal-producing counties in my district because of job opportunities.

"The economy in these coal-producing counties is the best it's ever been, simply because for the first time there is capital there in the hands of local people to invest and re-invest and it's creating taxable wealth and making good housing available, good schools, good roads, good water sources, airports, and all the things I think contribute to a good quality of life for all of the people. Not everyone has shared equitably or fairly or equally in the system but nonetheless I see many good things happening I've never seen before."

In defense of the coal industry, Mr. Wampler comments, "I still contend that people are not being exploited today by the coal industry as was the case 20 to 25 years ago. I happen to believe in the profit system. I don't think it's anything that's evil per se, but I'm not unmindful of what has gone before.

"In my district, the coal industry is doing things today that they did not do even ten years ago by way of contributing to more public functions, helping community colleges, establishing scholarships, just participating in a lot of things that help upgrade the quality of life in the area. I think it's awareness of a greater corporate responsibility. Most of them, in my judgment, are good corporate citizens." □

SHOWDOWN AT STINKING CREEK

BY LINDA GARDNER

It was summer in Stinking Creek. I was living with Appalachian mountain people in Knox county, southeastern Kentucky. Knox is listed by the U.S. census as one of the ten poorest counties in the nation. I was staying with the area's only nurse and midwife, Ms. Peggy Kemner, a Christian missionary from Pennsylvania, and Ms. Irma Gall, a former schoolteacher, now turned farmer and construction boss. These two remarkable women built their own home, barn, steel bridge, and church ten years ago in Stinking Creek, a typical hollow.

The residents live in tarpaper, wood, cardboard, and corrugated iron shacks. The houses range from liveable to pathetic. It is not uncommon to see mismatched dressers and beds sitting on bare dirt,

surrounded by propped up "walls." The people are cautious about strangers. Peggy and Irma are still considered outsiders by many of the hollow folk. One out of every four residents is functionally illiterate. People use coal dust to doctor cuts and internal parasites, hoping to stop the flow of blood by mumbling half-forgotten Bible scriptures.

Peggy and Irma are providing medical care, agricultural knowledge, instruction in home economics, and basic academic skills to those who will accept their help. My purpose was to acquaint the preschool children with books and crayons and so make the transition to formal schooling less frightening.

Linda Gardner is a freelance writer who spent two years in Appalachia working on her Master's Thesis, studying the language problems of Appalachian children.

Mountain children are usually strikingly handsome, at least for the first nine or ten years, and wild as wood sprites. For several weeks I saw none of my charges, but sat and read brightly-colored books while they hid and "listened" in the back room. If I pretended to be unaware, the little ones would creep forward and peer so closely over my shoulder that their tangled locks lay against mine. But if I turned to look, or spoke directly to them, the whole crew would scuttle breathless and giggling into the nooks and crannies of the ramshackle cabins. Eventually small toys and a liberal supply of penny candy coaxed them out, and from then on they were irrepressible. They waited impatiently for my visits, hanging over the broken and unsteady porch railings, scuffling and elbowing each other aside like young puppies to loll in my lap and turn the dog-eared pages.

I chose ten families to work with on a daily basis. Mountain folk were hardly waiting with open arms for midwestern enlightenment. They seemed hospitable and glad of diversion, but assiduously avoided the topic of reading and writing. Gradually, I realized this stemmed from a reluctance to appear lacking in front of the children. While parents badly wanted a better life for their youngsters, they also realized that any gain in knowledge, any skills painstakingly learned to insure employment, would lead to the loss of their children. And indeed it was so. Too often I met young people from similar backgrounds who had painfully broken away from the world of the hollows and now made good money in Chicago or Detroit. Missing the forests and mountain larks, finding insufficient pleasure in the long-sought cars and new clothes, they were bitter and restless, belonging in neither world.

"I HELD MYSELF AWAY, CLINGING TO THE SECURITY OF KNOWING I COULD LEAVE ANYTIME I WANTED."

The August heat was dizzying, the farmwork exhausting. After home visits, we cultivated and fertilized acres of pepper plants. Peggy and Irma were trying to replace tobacco as the main cash crop, but the pepper seedlings required painstaking care. Each plant had to be fertilized individually with a teaspoonful of magnesium. We spent hours shuffling up and down the shimmering rows on our knees, dusty scoop in hand, sunburned nose to the pepper stem. Peggy felt hard work led the way to God, and the speediest way to find God was with your nose to the earth and your bottom to the blazing sun. After several weeks we grew accus-

tomed to the routine and became idiotically pleased with our ability to toil away like drovers.

Though I struggled doggedly to feel a sense of closeness and commitment to the desperate residents, the incongruity of drowning in such wretched straits just half an hour off interstate 75 somehow kept me from coming to grips with a tragedy which made no sense, had no precedent in my own life. I held myself away, clinging to the security of knowing I could leave, could clamber hot and sticky into my indomitable dusty Cutlass and streak down the highway to one of Howard Johnson's sterile and interchangeable cells, bathroom awash with white pile towels, sheets so taut and antiseptic they seemed to draw the very moisture from my skin. How quickly would I escape the gritty images of wizened babies, drunk with heat and malnourishment . . . how soon would I plop myself down, relieved, in the student union and hold forth on the Problems of Appalachia?

One family came closer than the others to touching my heart. The wife, Sheila, was my age but looked old enough to have been my mother. Listless, thin-shouldered, Sheila had three small daughters in an area where families of 12 children were commonplace. She was one of the few mothers who asked for contraceptives in the hollow. Sheila could read a little and kept a tattered book her oldest girl had earned in Peggy's Bible class. Always tired, she suffered from chronic ulcers and anemia.

Sheila would curl up in a corner of the cabin and listen to our lessons, so absorbed, such longing in her thin face. I watched her counting softly along with the children, filling in missing letters until she heard her voice and subsided into a rueful and guilty silence. Arms wrapped around her wasted body, chigger-bitten bony knees drawn up on an ancient, sprung-spring, truck seat beached in the corner, I wondered what she saw as her children struggled toward a new life like moths to the flame. What would become of them, adrift in the amorphous rootless masses roaming our cities aimlessly in search of work or solace?

By August I could see real progress among my pupils. I was singlehandedly determined to lift them from future welfare recipient to happy factory worker in one generation. But I was a little saddened and puzzled over my failure to reach their parents. I drilled the children relentlessly and seldom missed a chance to equate learning with the good life and the acquisition of all those tantalizing possessions that flickered dimly across the TV screen in the general store.

We might have muddled on in this way until fall, the stubborn and fearful parents pitted against the determined and detached teacher, but for one of those sudden con-

frontations God must arrange for all people who think they can participate in life as a spectator.

I remember the fetid, shimmering heat and the cicada-noon day. Stuffed as a wood tick with Peggy's chicken and wild blackberries, I ambled drowsily up the footpath to Sheila's cabin. Scrawny bantams were pecking among the chickweed that grew under the broken steps and hung limply over scattered pieces of linoleum kitchen tile. The children slumped in worn chairs, a few cracked china dishes and aluminum Dixie Queen pie plates strewn aimlessly around the rough planking. Dinner was laid out, beige soup beans suspended in a sludge of wrinkled gravy, scorched and dry cornbread made from coarse grain and water, and grey milk in a cloudy mason jar, capped with bovine hairs and assorted specks and insect carcasses. A large garden onion, cut jaggedly once through, rested atop grit and outer sheaves of skin in the center of the table.

I paused, thunderstruck. The worst had occurred. After weeks of warnings about dysentery, trenchmouth, influenza and hookworm, after firm admonitions against lending my mouth to an Appalachian water dipper on pains of watching every one of those orthodontist-nurtured and refinanced teeth dropping right out, I was about to be invited to a meal.

Sheila took my hand and led me shyly to the table. A child slid hurriedly off a chair. The others drew behind their mother, peeking out with bright feverish eyes. "Set and eat with us," Sheila offered, voice warm with pride. My stomach lurched. The moment was critical. Peggy had cautioned, "If people really like you, they'll ask you to eat with them. If you refuse, they'll never ask you again." Unfortunately, she never got around to resolving the contradiction between this and her other warnings about sanitation. At least two of Sheila's children had been sick all week from some type of intestional flu that left them shivering with chills and teary-eyed from cramps. I thought of all I'd wanted to achieve with this family and berated myself for arriving so early in the afternoon.

The little girls clustered around my chair as I perched gingerly on the splintery edge. I was perfectly numb, textbook illustrations of cadaverous hookworm and dysentery victims shuffled before my eyes. Desperately I surveyed the offerings. What looked to be least lethal? Before I could choose, Sheila poured some lukewarm milk into a jelly jar and held it out. I swallowed gratefully, delighted to surrender all responsibility for my fate.

The little family waited, concern beginning to erase their anxious-to-please expressions. "I bet Peggy cooks real good," Sheila murmured sadly. "I guess you don't eat like this

"IT WAS THE STUBBORN AND FEARFUL PARENTS AGAINST THE DETERMINED AND DETACHED TEACHER."

much." It was unbearable. Singlehandedly my stubbornness was going to sink the whole project. I seized a chunk of arid cornbread, chewing furiously and smiling broadly. "It's great," I boomed, spraying crumbs on the solemn children, "just great!" Reassured, Sheila placed the rest of the cornbread on my plate. Eyeing it despairingly I plunged ahead, requiring the rest of the mason jar's contents to force the gritty stuff down. "Probably drank their whole day's milk supply," I realized miserably, too late.

Suddenly a gummy-eyed and worm-distended-bellied puppy wobbled shakily into the kitchen, the little girls breaking their silence to tell me excitedly that their father's hunting dog had dropped a fine new litter. Sensing a chance for deliverance, I told them I'd love to see all the pups and the entire family disappeared in the direction of the barn. Left alone, I seized the moment to shove the remaining chunks of cornbread into my pocket. I could not swallow any more.

The children returned happily with arms full of weak and damp puppies, plopping them down on my lap, the table, and floor, where they squeaked thinly and crouched to wet on crooked, trembling legs. Relieved at the rescue, I was playing enthusiastically with the sour-smelling dejected pups until I noticed the mother dog, a gaunt and shrinking creature hovering oddly near my chair. Nostrils working, jaws salivating, she began to root determinedly against my pant leg. Talking loudly, concealed by the table top, I gave the dog a vigorous push away with my knee. Undaunted, she followed the leg right back under the table and began to whine and paw at my bulging pocket. Discovery was imminent. I stood up quickly, grabbed a wedge of what I thought was a sweet garden onion, moved to the cupboard to discourage the frantic dog, and bit deeply into the onion.

Tears started to my eyes and my sinuses curled like fan-tailed shrimp. The blasted thing was liquid fire. (I learned later that mountain people cut tiny wedges of these fiery onions to eat with their cornbread and greens, adding scant interest to what would otherwise be a bland and monotonous diet.) I whooped and coughed, trying to suppress the shuddering esophagal heaves which would surely propel me into a coughing fit. Momentarily under control, beet-red with embarrassment, eyes streaming and sinuses dying, I turned and gave the

assembled and amazed company a watery smile. I did not trust myself to attempt speech. Still hoping to carry the whole fiasco off, I seized the nearest puppy and cuddled it under my chin. A fatal error. Deprived of the relief of coughing, my eyes and nose continued to stream. I felt a warm trickle edge toward my upper lip. I stared hopefully at the ceiling, praying natural gravity would correct the situation. I slapped my pockets desperately, only to find my handkerchief resting wadded and useless under three inches of incriminating cornbread crumbs. I was wearing a sleeveless blouse—no help from that quarter. Still studying the ceiling and sniffing violently, I considered the possible courses of action. I could wipe my leaking nose on my bare forearm, or I could ask for some sort of tissue paper. While I'd seen mountain people blow their nose with their fingers, or wipe a baby's face with a dress hem, I couldn't imagine myself, as guest and teacher, following suit. We stared at each other mutely, trapped by good intentions and years of isolation from each other's worlds. The warm droplet on my lip began to tremble. I scrubbed broadly with my forearm, obliterating the rest of the dry and useable area. My nose continued to stream.

I grabbed the tin dipper of water, fervently hoping all the germs inside me by now would annihilate each other, and cleared my throat sufficiently to croak out, "May I please have a tissue?"

"AFTER THE CAUTIONS ABOUT HOOKWORM AND THE LIKE, I WAS FACED WITH A SINCERE OFFER TO SIT AND EAT."

Sheila was galvanized into action. She raced through the little house, rummaging under stacks of clothes, overturning contents of bureau drawers. The truth fell with a sickening thud. Of course there was no tissue paper. No towels, or toilet paper. Wanting only to share with me, these proud and diffident people had been embarrassed and confused by my incongruous middle-class requests. Hunched miserably in my chair, scrubbing sodden face with soggy forearm, I wished desperately I had not forever ruined this chance to "set and eat with them." Sheila scurried by me, mute and frantic as a hunted rabbit. I heard another drawer hit the floor, then rummaging, then silence. By now I was in tears.

Sheila returned to the kitchen hugging a parcel in the crook of her arm. Kneeling in front of my chair, desperate to make it right between us again, she laid a soft bundle across my knees and pleaded urgently, "Here hon, use this." She tugged my fist away from my eyes.

"Take this here," she urged again. I peeked. On my lap was a white, hand-embroidered blouse folded neatly in yellowing tissue paper. In the dark and fetid cabin, the silken cloth shimmered like a prayer ascending. Where could this lovely thing have come from? I'd never seen such clothing in the hollow before. Perhaps these were the clothes Sheila had married in, now wrapped away from heart and mind like the life she had wanted for her big-eyed, spindle-legged daughters.

Sheila patted my sticky legs and lifted the silk out of its gleaming fold. "Baby . . . it's clean . . ." As she reached up to touch my tears I was overcome with the pain I had caused this gentle woman and we hugged each other shyly, smiling and sniffling together with a misery too tangled for words.

We were both a little embarrassed. Sheila herded her girls toward me, withdrew to the truck seat, and waited intently for the afternoon's lessons to begin. And I, child of preventive dentistry and diaper service, blew my nose briskly with my fingers and pondered the possibility that if I carried a candle instead of a torch, and looked for the welcome instead of the resident beasties in those tin dippers, I, too, might just be lucky enough to learn some of the skills necessary for success in my world. □

Alice Rhoades uses the school library to help with her studies.

MOUNTAIN TEENS LEARN AT EAST END SCHOOL

BY ANNE BRANDSTETTER

Although she was born in Cincinnati, Sue Schaefer's parents were from Appalachia and Sue considers herself a "hillbilly." She dropped out of the local high school in the tenth grade because she felt she wasn't "learning a thing."

Sue is quite typical of the many mountain people who have migrated to Cincinnati's East End for several generations. For her and her friends and neighbors, the transition from mountain living to urban life is a difficult adjustment. Rather than put up with an embarrassing or uncomfortable school situation, where they feel ostracized by relatively well-to-do students who don't share their values, mountain people often react by quitting school. And it is for these people

Minnie Brown, a public schoolteacher, helps Debbie Morgan with one of her subjects.

To facilitate learning and individual attention, the student/teacher ratio is low.

Photos by Ilgars Kreslins

that the East End Alternative School (EEAS) was begun in 1972.

Staffed by community people working together to create their own education, the school is free, and has over 90 students taking courses to complete their high school equivalency test (GED), vocational courses, and also courses just for fun.

Sue Schaefer was one of the lucky ones, who found out about the school through friends, but her story is not atypical of EEAS students. Last year she was chairperson of the student board. This year she is a VISTA volunteer at the school. She works in the office, conducts school meetings, makes publicity posters, helps to write the

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Anne Brandstetter is a free-lance writer who is familiar with the East End Alternative School.

school newspaper, and conducts her own personal recruiting campaign to hustle more East Enders back to school! And at the same time, Sue is preparing for a high school equivalency exam herself.

The East End Alternative School was begun by a committee of local citizens and VISTA volunteers who wanted to set up a non-profit alternative school which would have a small student/teacher ratio, provide individual attention to the students, and be controlled by the people in the community. To do this, the committee contacted the Cincinnati Public Schools for a certified teacher to conduct GED classes; they asked various charitable organizations for contributions to cover the school's operating expenses; and then sent out feelers to community schools and churches for a volunteer staff. Finally, members of the committee went from door to door throughout the East End, personally inviting people to come to the school.

The success of this effort was notable, and today, under the direction of Ms. Blair Mooney, part-time coordinator of the school, there are four part-time paid teachers, 18 volunteer teachers and tutors, a vocational counselor and some learning materials supplied by the Cincinnati Public Schools.

The top academic priority at EEAS is the General Educational Development (GED) program which leads to a high school equivalency certificate. Most colleges and employers recognize this certificate as equivalent to a high school diploma, and therefore obtaining one improves a student's level of competence and makes him or her eligible for better jobs.

When a student first enrolls in the GED program, she or he is given a series of placement tests to determine reading level, math proficiency and social studies background. The results of these tests determine where students will begin their studies. Since all students receive individual attention and instructions, they are free to learn at their own pace. They take periodic tests to gauge their progress and grade themselves on their performance. And because students learn at their own pace, the result is that there are no failures.

Eighty-two of the more than 90 students are now enrolled in the GED program, a 50 percent increase over last year's enrollment for a high school equivalency certificate. And last year, nine students passed the GED test; three teenagers were persuaded to go back to high school; and three students were enrolled in a trade school or college.

Sandy Gagen, 22, is one person who has already gained a lot from the program at EEAS. Married and the mother of two children, she earned her GED in February, 1975. At that time, her husband had lost his job and the family was on

"THIS SCHOOL SUCCEEDS BECAUSE OF ITS GRASS-ROOTS COMMUNITY BASE, AND THE FACT THAT NO ONE IS A FAILURE."

welfare. Since she got a GED, Sandy was able to enroll in a practical nursing program at Stowe Adult Center in Cincinnati. By next January, she hopes to be qualified as a Licensed Practical Nurse. When asked how she felt about the EEAS, Sandy said, "If it weren't for this school, I wouldn't be where I am now. I'd be just drifting around, like always."

The East End Alternative School has the highest attendance rate and a high percentage of graduates of the eight "satellite schools" in the Adult Basic Education Program in Cincinnati. Mr. Ralph Senselis, liaison between EEAS and the Cincinnati Public Schools, explained, "There is a close-knit companionship here that's unique. This cultural closeness is good for the school. It gives neighborhood people a chance to continue their education. Then hopefully, after that, they will be more willing and able to reach out to the total urban environment."

Courses outside of the GED program have included, "Everyday Bookkeeping," "Enjoying Books," and "Physical Fitness for Women." A woodworking class taught students how to make bookshelves, cutting boards and small furniture items. Sewing classes are offered for teens and adults. And special interest classes are often centered around the Appalachian culture. "Hillbilly History" teaches Appalachians about the history of migrations and develops an appreciation for "down home" food and music, native arts and crafts. Last summer a group of teen-age girls participated in classes on Appalachian culture, plus field trips to museums and parks throughout Cincinnati, to help them appreciate their own heritage, yet adapt to an urban environment.

"We've tried everything and changed our courses to fit the interests of our students and match the available volunteer teachers and facilities," said Ms. Mooney. She feels there are two reasons why EEAS is a success: first, no one at the school is a failure; and second, it's a community-run, grassroots organization.

Kathy Driehaus has been a volunteer math teacher for three years. She summed up the learning experience at EEAS when she said, "Running this school can help someone grow up. The students are given an opportunity to accept responsibility—and they take it."□

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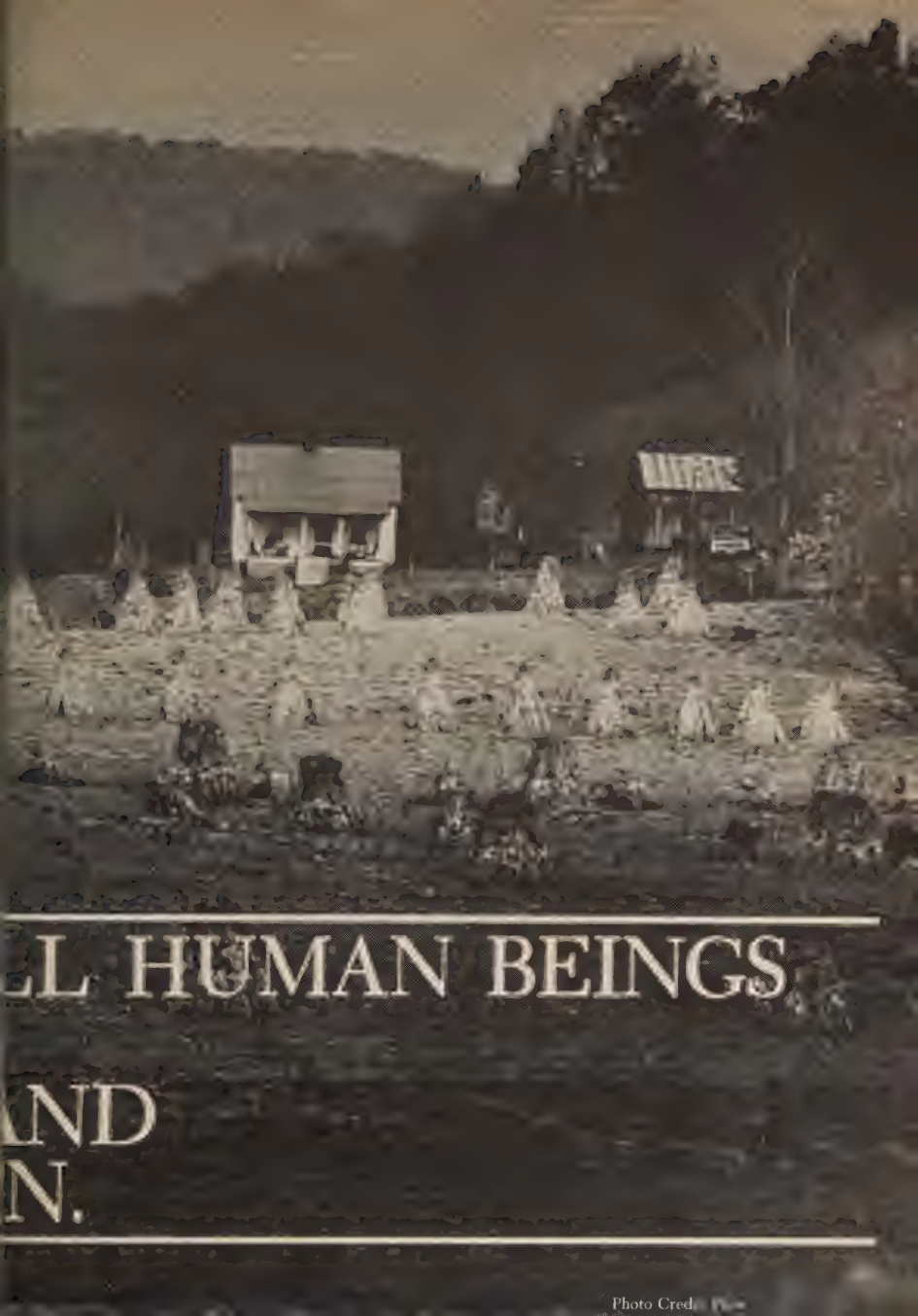
LL HUMAN BEINGS
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Mountain musicians L. B. Fairchild, Joe Dobbs and Junior Cole strike up a tune.

BY SI KAHN

The Appalachian mountains were one of the last of this country's frontiers. Long after the West had been "won," the Appalachians and the people who lived in them remained a mystery to other Americans. It's hard to realize now that up until the early years of this century almost nothing had been written about the mountains and the people who lived in them. In fact, the first Easterners to visit the mountains and report on what was happening there were considered adventurers—in 1910!

What they found—and what can still be found in many parts of the mountains today—was a culture which had been cut off from the outside world. Left to itself, this culture developed in ways of its own. It had started from the same

MUSIC IS A WAY OF LIFE

roots as much of early America—British, Scottish and Irish people who brought with them the traditions of the Old World, including its music. But the winds that shook the branches that grew from these roots were different, and so the tree grew differently.

What is it that makes the music of one group of people different from that of another group? There are four things that are especially important: (1) the music they knew to start with; (2) the new music they were exposed to along the way; (3) the instruments they had to work with; and (4) the conditions of their lives, the way they lived and worked. The musical traditions of

Si Kahn is a song writer, performing musician, and community organizer, who has worked over ten years in the South with civil rights and with workers in the coal and textile industries.

the mountaineers were mainly those of the British Isles. In fact, there were really three separate traditions: ballads, dance music and church music.

The ballads were story-songs. What we call ballads in popular music today are usually short love songs. But the old ballads were the way in which societies which lacked printing and writing communicated their traditions, their values, their history, their sense of who they were and where they'd been. Ballads were *sung* because the music made it easier on both the singer and the audience: Songs are usually easier to remember than poems, and usually they hold the attention of an audience better. So the old ballads that the mountaineers brought with them told the stories of knights and kings and queens, of elves and devils, of what happened to people who bucked the system.

"MUSICAL TRADITIONS OF MOUNTAINEERS CAME FROM OLD WORLD BALLADS, DANCE, AND CHURCH MUSIC."

So many of these old ballads continued to be sung in the Appalachian mountains that when British and Scottish folklorists began collecting these old songs around 1910, they found more of them

Part of the musical way of life is enjoying folk dancing.

surviving in Appalachia than in the British Isles. They were so intent on finding the songs that were hundreds of years old, though that they failed to write down the thousands of new ballads that were being "made" in the mountains. These ballads, often set to old tunes, commemorated local events, celebrated heroes, cut down villains. The best (and some of the worst) have survived, and thanks to them we know the details of dozens of actual train wrecks, murders, and elopements. We also know about the lives of people such as John Henry, the black "steel-driving man" who helped build the Big Bend Tunnel on the C & O Railroad in West Virginia.

Ballads were almost always sung unaccompanied. That was the way it had always been done; and besides, the only instrument in the mountains in the early years of settlement was the fiddle, and in a few places the dulcimer, which is actually a distant relation of the fiddle. Fiddle music was dance music. A fiddle's high sharp sound could carry over the stomping of dozens of boots on a rough wood floor at mountain dances (in the same situation, an unamplified guitar can hardly be heard).

The fiddle was the main instrument in the mountains for a lot of other reasons: it was small and could be carried by someone migrating into the mountains on foot (unlike a piano, for example, which wouldn't have made it over the roads of that time even in a wagon). The fiddle was easy to make out of native materials. And it adapted itself well to the music that the new migrants into the mountains remembered, especially the bagpipe music of Ireland and Scotland. If you listen carefully to mountain fiddling, you can hear that lost bagpipe sound, a steady droning that moves along with the tune and steadies it. The dulcimer has this same kind of droning sound, and so does a five-string banjo.

Mountain ballad singing and the mountain fiddle are fairly simple and straightforward, creating a feeling that has been called "the high lonesome sound." The harmony heard in some more modern derivatives of mountain music such as bluegrass and country-and-western actually has its roots in the church music the early mountaineers brought with them, the third part of mountain musical tradition. Much of this harmony had its roots in medieval singing; unlike much modern harmony, which tends to be sweet, it is often strange, distant, even chilling. It lent itself well to the isolated life in the mountains, the cabins standing alone in the dark night, and later the darkness and danger of the mines.

These three traditions—ballads, dance and church music—remained very much the same from the early settlement of the mountains up until the early part of this

century. They influenced each other, they changed each other, but the change was all within the tradition. Outside of the mountains, the rage was pianos and pump organs, sheet music and the early beginnings of Tin Pan Alley; but almost none of this entered the mountains. Isolated from the mainstream of American popular music, mountain music fed on itself and became stronger, sharper and more distinctive.

The beginnings of change came with the railroads in the early 1900's. Up until this time, Appalachia had been a frontier farming society, with almost no cash economy, and no industry other than the timbering that some mountaineers turned to. But as America industrialized, it needed soft coal—bituminous coal—to make steel and to run generators. A nation of farms was turning into a nation of factories, and it needed the coal that lay under the isolated farms of the mountaineers. The mountains have not been the same since.

Neither has mountain music. The old traditions remained—and have up till today—but they were broadened by the new music to which the mountain musicians became exposed, and the new instruments that began to come into the mountains. Many of the railroad workers who helped lay track into the Appalachian coal fields were blacks from the deep South. They brought with them a new instrument—the guitar—and a new music, one which was based on African rhythms but which had grown up in this country. The driving rhythms, the harmonies, the stark lyrics of the blues clearly impressed the mountaineers. The vocals had the same force and drive that the fiddle had at mountain dances; they were often sung *fast*, where all the ballads and church hymns had been sung slow. The three-line blues form had possibilities beyond the four-line stanza of the ballads and hymns, and mountain musicians began taking advantage of it:

"IT'S NOT PROTEST MUSIC, BUT SIMPLY SONGS ABOUT THE REALITIES OF LIFE IN THE MOUNTAINS."

Some blues are just blues,
mine are the miner's blues
Some blues are just blues,
mine are the miner's blues
Got coal in my hair,
got coal in my shoes

About this same time mountain musicians also discovered the banjo. The origins of the banjo in the mountains are unclear. It's originally an African instrument, and came

Instruments range from homemade to sophisticated at the Pipestem Folk Festival

to this country with the slave ships. During the Civil War, both armies issued four-string banjos to their troops. By 1900, the fifth "drone" string had been added, creating a bagpipe-like sound. It was probably this which attracted the mountaineers to the banjo. Both guitars and banjos could be ordered from the Sears, Roebuck catalog; although the catalog had already been around for a while, it only found its way into the mountains when the coal boom brought cash into the hollers.

All of these new influences came together at the same time. The force of new instruments and new musical ideas reshaped the old traditions of the mountains. An example: if you sing by yourself, you sing in a certain way, because your voice has to provide the sense of rhythm and harmony as well as the melody. But if an instrument provides the rhythm and the harmony, then you are freer to sing in different ways; your voice has more freedom. The same is true of a fiddle played by itself, or played with a banjo and guitar. Mountain music changed from being unaccompanied ballads

"MOUNTAIN BALLADS TELL US OF LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE JOHN HENRY, THE BLACK 'STEEL-DRIVING MAN.'"

Many mountain musicians have made their own dulcimers, which accounts for the great variety of shape and design.

Bob Krueger

and dance music—a voice or a fiddle by itself—to being accompanied. The basic unit of mountain music was no longer only the solo musician, but the *fiddle band*, consisting of a fiddle, banjo and guitar. Thirty years later, a mandolin would be added to this combination, creating the bluegrass band.

It's important to realize that these new developments in mountain music did not replace the old ways. They simply existed side by side with them. Today in the mountains, there are still musicians who play only unaccompanied fiddle, or who only sing ballads, although both of these are in a minority. Many mountain musicians play a variety of styles. But the fact that the old traditions did not die out as the new ones came in is what gives mountain music much of its breadth and vitality today.

Other changes also helped in the transition. Radio and later record players exposed mountain musicians to other types of music. Many of these were absorbed into mountain tradition; a number of "traditional" numbers are in fact Tin Pan Alley songs of the 20's and 30's which were reworked to fit the mold created by mountain instruments, styles and harmonies. These harmonies were in fact the old church harmonies, and together with the backup of fiddle, banjo and guitar they gave a very different sound and feel to popular songs, twisting them to fit what musicians were comfortable with and what audiences expected. For there were also now "audiences," where previously there had been at the most neighborhood dances. Radio and the automobile were changing mountaineers, who just happened to play music, into professional musicians. The mountains became a training ground for commercial musicians; even today, most bluegrass musicians and many country-and-western performers come from mountain communities.

But not all mountain music took the road to Nashville. In fact, the strongest influence on mountain music was not the new instruments that were being played or the new types of music that were being heard, but the tremendous changes that were taking place in mountain society.

As coal began to dominate Appalachia, mountaineers became miners, and a society changed. The music changed, too, because the old music could no longer meet the needs of people in that society. People needed music that could reflect the tension of life in an industrialized society; the loss of freedom as they moved from mountain farms to company coal camps; the fears of death in the mines; the tensions and exultations of union organizing. They created a music that met these needs, a music which was rooted in their old traditions, but which was still a part of the new ways. As their ways of

life changed, their music changed.

Many of the new songs were written to traditional tunes, either ballads or hymns. One favorite mountain ballad, "Life Is Like A Mountain Railroad," has a chorus that goes:

Blessed Savior, there to guide us
Till we reach that distant shore
Where the angels wait to join us
In God's grace forever more

In the early 1900's, this was reworked by an anonymous singer (or singers) into "Miner's Life":

Union miners, stand together
Heed no operator's tale
Keep your hand upon the dollar
And your eye upon the scale.

And in the 1930's a North Carolina textile worker, Dorsey Dixon, took one or both of these songs and made "Weaver's Life":

Soon we'll end this life of weaving
Soon we'll reach a distant shore
Where we'll rest from filling batteries
We won't have to weave no more

While most of those who made the earlier ballads and songs are unknown, we do know who many of these singers were. Most of them were not professional musicians; they were mountain people for whom music was an inseparable part of their lives. Aunt Molly Jackson, one of the finest mountain songmakers, was a midwife in Clay County, Kentucky. Many of her songs were written during the union organizing drives of the 1930's:

"A FIDDLE'S HIGH SHARP SOUND COULD CARRY OVER THE STOMPING OF DOZENS OF BOOTS ON WOOD FLOORS."

I am a union woman
Just as brave as I can be
I do not like the bosses
And the bosses don't like me

This same tune, an old hymn, was used by Florence Reece when she wrote "Which Side Are You On?":

They say they have to guard us
To educate their child
Their children live in luxury
Our children's almost wild
Which side are you on?
Which side are you on?

(© 1947 by Stormking Music, Inc.)

Some people might call this protest or political music. But in fact it is simply music about the realities of life in the mountains.

Florence, who today lives near Knoxville, Tenn., is a traditional mountain musician in the best sense, a fine singer of both ballads and hymns, as well as her own songs. She is herself a fine example of the strength of mountain music as well as mountain people, of the way in

HEAR MOUNTAIN MUSIC

A DISCOGRAPHY

June Appal Records is an Appalachian-based recording company specializing in traditional and contemporary mountain music. Order your albums of June Appal Records for five dollars each, plus 50 cents for postage, from: June Appal Records, P.O. Box 743, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858. Recommended are the following:

☐ *Passing Through the Garden* (June Appal 001) Nimrod Workman and his daughter Phyllis Boyens sing traditional English ballads as well as coal mine ballads and sacred songs. This record comes with a book about Nimrod, his family and his songs.
☐ *New Wood* (June Appal 002) This album features Si Kahn, singer-songwriter. "Marvin Barr" concerns a black veteran who attempted to organize a black community in a southern town. "Sunrise" is a song about the new South. "Brookside" and "Lawrence Jones" are about the organizing of the Harlan County, Kentucky, coal mine.

☐ *How Can I Keep from Singing* (June Appal 003) Songs by John McCutcheon featuring hammered dulcimer, Appalachian dulcimer, banjo, guitar, fiddle, Jew's harp, and spoons. This album contains many traditional songs as well as some new songs.
☐ *Grandfather's Greatest Hits—Volume I* (June Appal 004) An album of mountain tales told by the Roadside Theatre, collected in the hills of Kentucky, Virginia, and North Carolina. They are told dramatically. This album is excellent for young and old.
☐ *Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party* (June Appal 005) Bluegrass music by the New River Boys of East Tennessee, this album has an old-time bluegrass flavor and features bluegrass standards as well as some new songs written by the group. "Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party," "New River Girl," "Little Georgia Rose," plus nine others.
☐ *Cotton Mill Blues* (June Appal 006) Mountain Musicians Cooperative: Songs from the cotton mill, old and new. Songs about hard living, brown lung, and hope.

Rounder Records collects American traditional and contemporary folk music. Each album costs four dollars, plus 50 cents postage for one record, and postage free if more than one record is ordered. Order from: Rounder Records, 186 Willow Avenue, Somerville, Mass. 02144. Recommended are the following:

☐ *Hazel and Alice* (Rounder 0027) Contemporary and traditional music as presented by two of the best songwriters and performers.
☐ *Aunt Molly Jackson* (Rounder 1002) An album by one of the finest mountain songmakers.
☐ *Sarah Ogan Gunning* (Rounder 0051) Old ballads and songs by a traditional performer (Aunt Molly Jackson's half-sister).
☐ *Come All You Coal Miners* (Rounder 4005) An album of songs by Nimrod Workman, Sarah Ogan Gunning, George Tucker, and Hazel Dickens.

which old traditions can live side by side with the new, each lending strength to the other.

Most of the best mountain musicians today—even those who play in the most contemporary styles—have roots deep in this tradition. Nimrod Workman, an 81-year-old disabled coal miner, mixes old ballads like "Lord Bateman" with his own songs about life in the mines:

That man that made the big machinery
He's taken out all my coal
He's leavin' children hungry
And he's robbin' your good land poor

I don't see what's wrong with that government
They won't protect my place nor me
When Rockefeller gets all that big machinery
He's gonna turn it over to me
I'm gonna take it to the Atlantic Ocean
I'm gonna dump it in the middle of the sea

(© 1975 by Nimrod Workman.)

Today, there are dozens of fine songwriters in the mountains. Many of their songs are written in response to changes in the mountains today. They talk about black lung, strip-mining, a society that is controlled from the outside, corporations and machinery. In this sense they are very modern. But in a broader sense they are right in the middle of the tradition of mountain music. If the themes are new, the instruments are old: fiddles, banjos, guitars, mandolins, dulcimers, autoharps. Many of the new songs are based on old tunes, ballads, hymns and even dance tunes. There are hundreds of fine ballad singers, who sing both the old ballads brought from Scotland, Ireland and England, and the later ones made in this country. There are groups that sing the old hymns with the old harmonies—many of whom consider the fiddle the "devil's instrument," and who will not sing or play the other styles of mountain music. There are fiddlers, fiddle bands, and bluegrass bands. Mountain music is a reflection of mountain society: a mixture of pride in the past, tolerance for many different styles and interpretations, a sense of its own problems today, and a vision of a better life in days to come. □

"MOST BLUEGRASS MUSICIANS AND MANY COUNTRY-WESTERN PERFORMERS COME FROM THE MOUNTAINS."

The fiddle is one of the oldest instruments in the mountains.

Motels and resorts have begun to line the highways in Appalachia, along with fast food chains and gas stations.

Bob Krueger

BY RICHARD JACKSON

Why should I be saddened and angered by what I see tourism and resort development doing to the Southern Appalachians? I am most concerned, naturally, because it's occurring in the mountains where I live. It affects my life, it limits my choices, it destroys beauty (as I understand that word), and it does all this for reasons that seem to me insufficient. It's these "reasons" I want to deal with.

It's not a matter of "right" and "wrong." Tourism and resort development are, to my way of thinking, simply inaccurate. That is, they miss the point, fail most of the time to accomplish what is claimed for them, and often end up being destructive and grotesque.

Increasingly, I believe that the phenomena of tourism and resort

Land developers seldom improve the local economy much, but manage to destroy a significant part of the scenery.

AN ESCAPE FROM WHAT?

development are closely related to larger issues: Our failure to deal creatively with leisure or spare time, responsible use of energy, the value of diversity in the way people choose to live, the fact of hunger in most of the world, and our seemingly endless ability to deceive ourselves about what we claim to be doing and what is actually happening.

Being born, raised, and living in the Appalachian mountains does not make me an expert, but it does inform my life, my values, my theology, and my hopes. Mostly, it poses some questions, and I've got a lot more questions than I have answers. My questions are based upon some assumptions which have

Richard Jackson, is librarian at Lees-McCrae College, Banner Elk, N.C., and member of the Appalachian Affairs Commission of the Diocese of Western North Carolina.

remained pretty constant for a number of years, and I believe that most of them are demonstrable.

First, it is clear to me that Appalachia is, always has been, and promises to remain, a colony to the rest of the United States. By that, I mean that most of its wealth—furs, timber, minerals, and people—have been used to benefit those who live outside its boundaries more than to benefit those who live within it. Another characteristic of a colony is that its people are frequently held up to either ridicule or flat-out lied about. The caricatures of mountain people seen on television or in comics are familiar enough.

Second, I no longer believe that the problems of Appalachia can be understood as merely political, economic, or social. I believe that the problems of my region can best be understood in spiritual terms. Greed seems to me to be a spiritual problem, and I believe greed is the issue. Thoughtless pride is a spiritual problem, and both thoughtlessness and pride are wreaking havoc in Appalachia.

In order to address these kinds of illnesses, all sorts of programs, movements, and helpers have been sent into the mountains. Most often, they were sent to the wrong places. The owners of these problems reside in New York, Washington, Miami, Atlanta, Detroit and other such places, and the "doctors" need to be sent there. Most of West Virginia is owned by people and corporations outside its boundaries. About two-thirds of the strip-mines are owned by three New York banks. Over half the acreage of many mountain counties is owned by people who do not live in those counties.

"THE SAME MENTALITY AND MOTIVATION THAT BUILT CITIES ARE NOW BUILDING RESORT CENTERS—FAST, LARGE PROFIT."

I do not belong to, nor agree with, those who would enshrine the "hillbilly" as some kind of latter-day noble savage. I do not regard my neighbors, nor myself, as quaint. Mountain people are a part of this nation, and they share in its mistakes, inaccuracies, greed, and pride. They sometimes excel in thoughtlessness. One thing, though, a sorry mountaineer is no better and no worse than a sorry middle-level executive. He may even be a middle-level executive, and a real estate agent in the bargain.

Well, I said that I had some questions. It's time to examine one or two. How does tourism start? What is it supposed to do? Does it do what is claimed for it?

At its simplest, tourism is one person going somewhere to look at those things which are not familiar, or readily available at home. In this

case, he finds mountains. The words he will likely use to describe them are: restful, clean, unspoiled, pretty, quiet, natural, peaceful, exciting, etc. It likely won't be long until he tells his friends about the place he has found for his vacation, and soon quite a number of people are going in the same direction, and a pattern begins to develop.

What began as people enjoying a place can, and increasingly does, become an invasion. There are corporations and wealthy individuals who employ "scouts" to seek out such unspoiled places. They work quietly, often with real estate agencies, so that unsuspecting natives and rivals remain unaware of their work. Land prices thus stay low, and a package of land is assembled. These large tracts, or "packages" are purchased at what real estate agents call a "steal"—that is, very low prices. "Steal" is one of the most accurate words in the land development vocabulary.

Soon, there are surveyors to lay out roads and lots, publicity campaigns are designed, offices opened, and the development is underway. Most states have agencies that can be depended upon to help with the development by building more and better roads, providing some free publicity, and offering a great deal of encouragement in the name of progress. Since these developments are essentially real estate speculation, buyers of lots for vacation homes are attracted by the building of ski runs, golf courses, tennis courts, swimming pools, and other entertainments.

Frequently, the developers will have their own construction company and collections of appropriate house plans so they can offer buyers a completed home "nestled in the quiet splendor of the mountains." For those unwilling to take on the maintenance of a house, condominiums are also offered for sale. If the resort development shows signs of being successful, a host of attendant services begin to appear: restaurants, fast-food drive-ins, motels, camp grounds, service stations, convenience stores, and shopping centers.

It doesn't take long for the natural qualities which attracted development in the first place to become severely damaged or totally destroyed. The quietness is gone, the waters are silted, some communities are practically floating on the sewage from hastily-built vacation homes, traffic is awful, and what was rural becomes suburban.

The advertisements from the resorts appeal to folks to "escape." Escape from what? The cities? Who built the cities? Who contributes to the things which make a city a place to be escaped from? I believe it was developers who built those monotonous, treeless rows of houses and called them sub-divisions. The same mentality that builds cities is now building resort developments,

and claiming to be ecology-minded. That mentality does not change just by moving from the city to the mountains. The motivation is the same—fast, large profit.

How can it happen? It can happen because most of us are taught to believe that money and wealth are the same thing, and that anything which makes a dollar can't be all bad. It's not enough to make "bad" guys out of developers. They wouldn't build unless someone was willing to buy, unless there were investors who wanted a quick return. Those who buy these "mountain-side chalets" also own part of the problem.

I think some clues to their ownership in the rip-off of the mountains can be found in some of the words used in the brochures issued by various resorts. Words like: entertainment, escape, recreation, vacation, status, and retreat. I would point out that re-creation (making new) and entertainment are not the same thing; that vacation stems from vacant; that there is a difference between escape *to* and escape *from*. A good deal of our present modes of entertainment require us to be passive observers—spectators, or offer us merely new sensations not unlike an exotic dessert. The end product of an awful lot of our entertainments are not re-created, refreshed, growing people, but merely a car full of tired, sated people fighting traffic to get back home.

One of the most destructive concepts is that there is something called the "simple life," and this life is available in resort developments. I suggest that there is no such thing as "simple" life. We are all, as persons, much more complex than we like to think. The choice is not between simple and complex, but between basic and frivolous.

Life is, after all, very much a matter of style. There is not much that is simple about growing food, or dressing out a butchered hog, or preserving those things in a way that makes them not only fit to eat, but palatable as well. Yet you and I live in a culture that ridicules (among others) the "hick," the "redneck," Oakies, and hillbillies; that makes farmers and rural folks the butt of jokes and the recipients of programs designed to help them out of the sticks and into the suburbs.

We treat agriculture lightly, and much of the world is hungry. We put golf courses on good farm land. North Carolina alone covers 200 acres per day with macadam or roofs. We pour salt on the roads to keep them safe for skiers and pollute the land and water from which all life comes. Virtually all of us eat by virtue of someone else's sweat. What are we doing?

The social claims made in behalf of tourism and resort development are often expressed in such a way that invites me to believe that the social and economic benefits are the reason for tourism and develop-

"TO TRY TO LIVE
A PICTURE POSTCARD
KIND OF LIFE
S TO LIE ABOUT
WHAT IS REALLY
HAPPENING."

ment. I am told that the tax base is better, that there is more and better employment, that there is progress. would be foolish to deny all these claims, but I would point out that the benefits which accrue to local people are marginal, fragile, do not happen intentionally, but rather occur by accident because they do not cost anything. Further, I think the "progress" being so admired is pretty cheap progress. Do the aged have more options? Do the young have more opportunities for growth? Is there less crime? Is there better medical care? In short, has the quality of life actually improved? If so, by whose standards? There is another kind of development going on in the mountains—very exclusive, very expensive "communities" which are characterized by having one entrance, a fence around the whole thing, and a guard stationed at the gate, usually armed. The only thing I know to call them is "walled community." I wonder what the guard is for. If the motivation for these guards is fear, then, fear of what? I'm more afraid of them than they are of me. What scares me most is their claim to be a community.

"Community" is another word that is used a lot lately, usually in a way that suggests that community, neighborhood, is something that can be built, constructed, much like an automobile or an airplane. Well, one of the most destructive effects of tourism and resort development is the loss of community. It's hard to love one's neighbor when he is not there most of the time, when his way of living differs radically from those around him, when his absence is marked by a chain across his driveway, or when you can't get in because of the guard and fences. Sadly, I think that the impetus for much of the development now going on stems from a sense of loss of community, and a loneliness for neighbors. So far, I see no evidence to support the assumption that community is a product of technology, that one can be built.

I am not optimistic about the future of the mountains. Most of us know what strip-mining has done and is doing. The results of that are highly visible, but we have not yet stopped it. Tourism and development are much more subtle and often attractive. We cannot see that the tax rates become inflated along with land values, that local people are being turned into a servant class, that basic life is being sacrificed for often frivolous pastimes.

How can we convey the insidious inaccuracy of our present devotion

to tourism, leisure, and hasty progress? We should already know, in uniquely personal ways, that the earth is finite and limited, that comfort at the expense of others is an error, that capriciously limiting the choices of others limits our own. Instead, we seem to cling to common assumptions about travel being broadening (automatically!), that big is better than small, urban better than rural, and that all our problems are solvable if given enough money and technology.

What would happen if we began to examine carefully what we are doing? If we began to think as critically as our educators have so proudly told us we are prepared to do? The only time I hear the word "adequate" applied to food, housing, transportation is when people are talking about folks on welfare, the poor, or Third World nations. I wonder what would happen if a lot of us in the great American middle class began to apply "adequate" to ourselves, began to decide what would, for us, be enough—enough income, enough car, enough food, enough house. If we could do that, would it help to stop the senseless upward spiral of surplus, inflation, and greed?

There are a lot of "doers-of-the-right," "saviors" who descend on "backward" regions to help them into the great middle class. Like a lot of helpers, they came from cities where the poor went begging daily, where thousands struggled to survive on inadequate wages. The

"THE BEST HANDBOOK ON 'HOW-TO-DO-COMMUNITY' IS THE BIBLE. IT'S A GOOD TIME TO TRY IT."

came from capitals where politica corruption was an almost tangibl agent in the air, where blacks an Chicanos, and poor whites wer kept as powerless and as invisible a possible. Like so many in othe nations, at other times, they found i easier to go to the aid of those over up, or "out there," than to deal wit pain and injustice close at hand. believe that dealing with guilt, pain and injustice is one of the things tha makes us not only neighbors, bu brothers and sisters, and to struggl to live a picture postcard kind of lif is to lie about what is happening.

I wonder what would happen i the helpers went into areas a willing to be affected as to affect, a willing to be changed, as to chang others? I wonder what would happen if all those people wh come to the mountains to escap stayed at home and spent thei vacation money in their own com munities? What could they wan that they could not have?

We need, it seems to me, to b very careful where we turn fo solutions. I suggest that we b

hesitant about depositing the problem at someone else's door. We are perhaps a great deal more responsible for what happens to us than we should like to think. If I am indeed stuck in a sorry, dehumanizing job in a city, and need to escape, how did I get there?

Be careful of any group who claims to be "preserving a culture." That's become one of the great hobbies of many of Appalachia's academic institutions. I suggest that mountain culture is not served by collecting music, crafts and stuffing them into a museum. I don't think one preserves a culture by recording its music, collecting its toys, and snapping pictures of the natives. That's more like embalming a culture—freezing a lifeless image and storing it away. A culture, a way of living, is preserved when people live it, but the freedom of people in the mountains to live life their way is rapidly being eroded. I do not understand those who claim that this is good.

There seems to me to be increasing evidence that we, as Americans, cannot continue to waste more than our share of the world's resources, and that we must learn to live differently. Our teachers in that enterprise are those who have always lived at the edges of this "system". . . blacks, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, and hillbillies. We may not have as much time to learn from them as we would like.

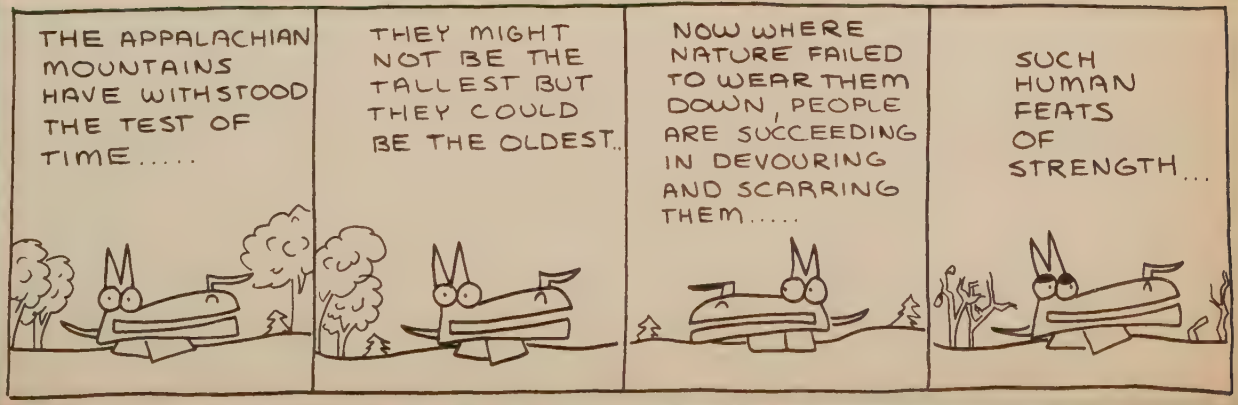
One last suggestion for those who might be able to try it. I have come to believe that the best handbook we have on "how-to-do-community" is the Bible. I have come to this reluctantly, and slowly, but it sure seems like a good time to try it. □

Resorts are built to cater to the tastes of those who come to have "fun" from outside the area, while most local residents live simply and are transformed into a servant class.

Richard Jackson

AN UPHILL FIGHT

PAPERCLIPS BY DOUG BRUNNER



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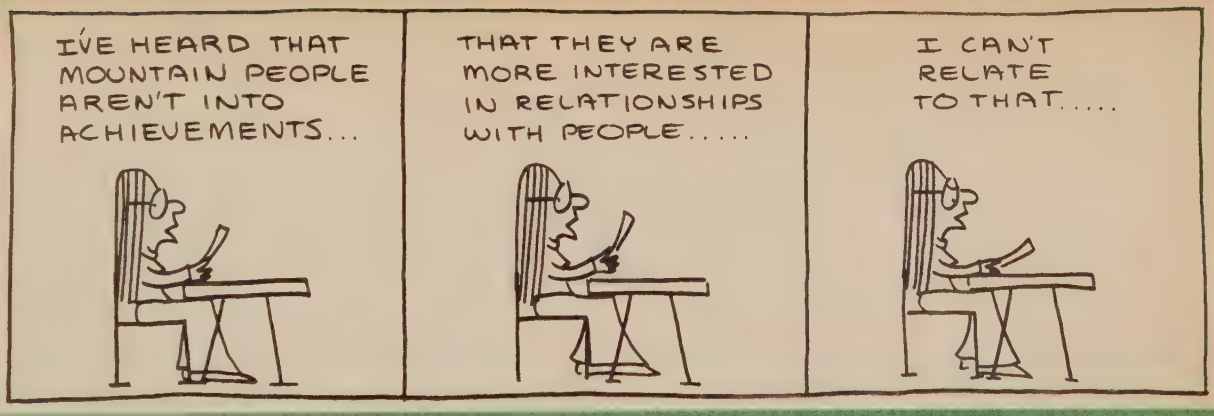
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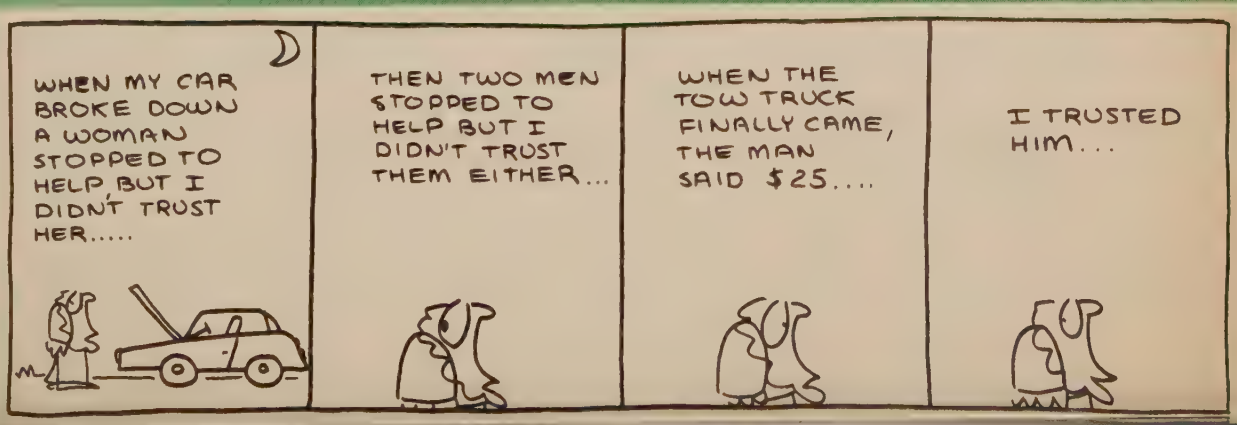
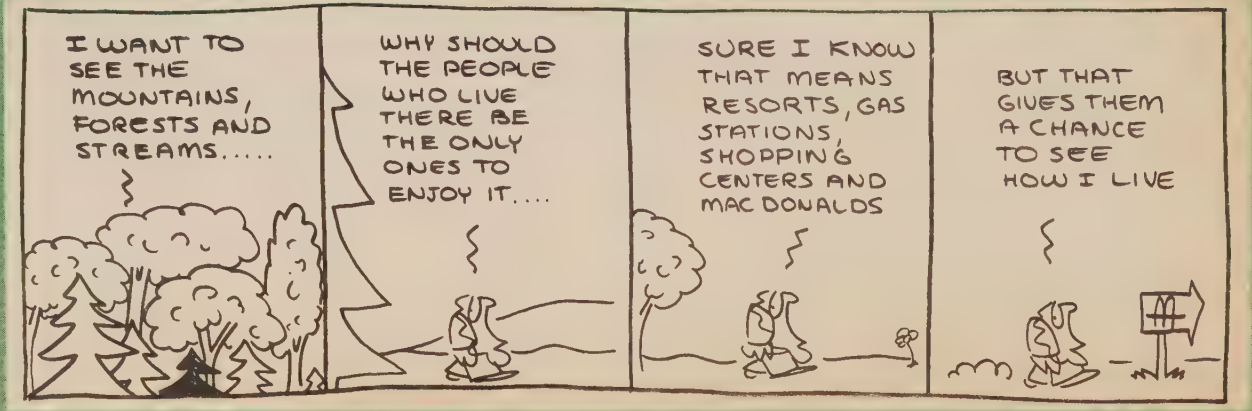
THAT THEY ARE MORE INTERESTED IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE.....
I CAN'T RELATE TO THAT.....

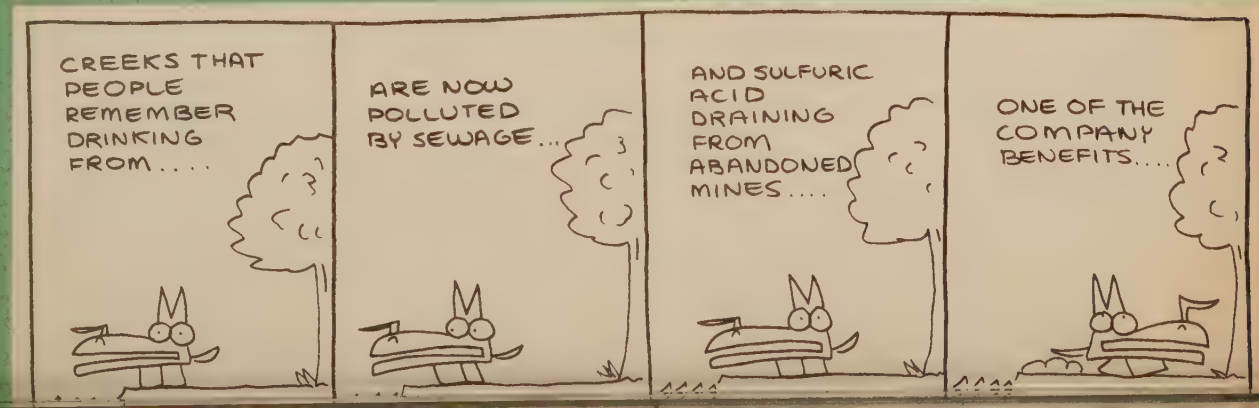

WHEN MY CAR BROKE DOWN A WOMAN STOPPED TO HELP, BUT I DIDN'T TRUST HER.....
THEN TWO MEN STOPPED TO HELP BUT I DIDN'T TRUST THEM EITHER...
WHEN THE TOW TRUCK FINALLY CAME, THE MAN SAID $25....
I TRUSTED HIM...

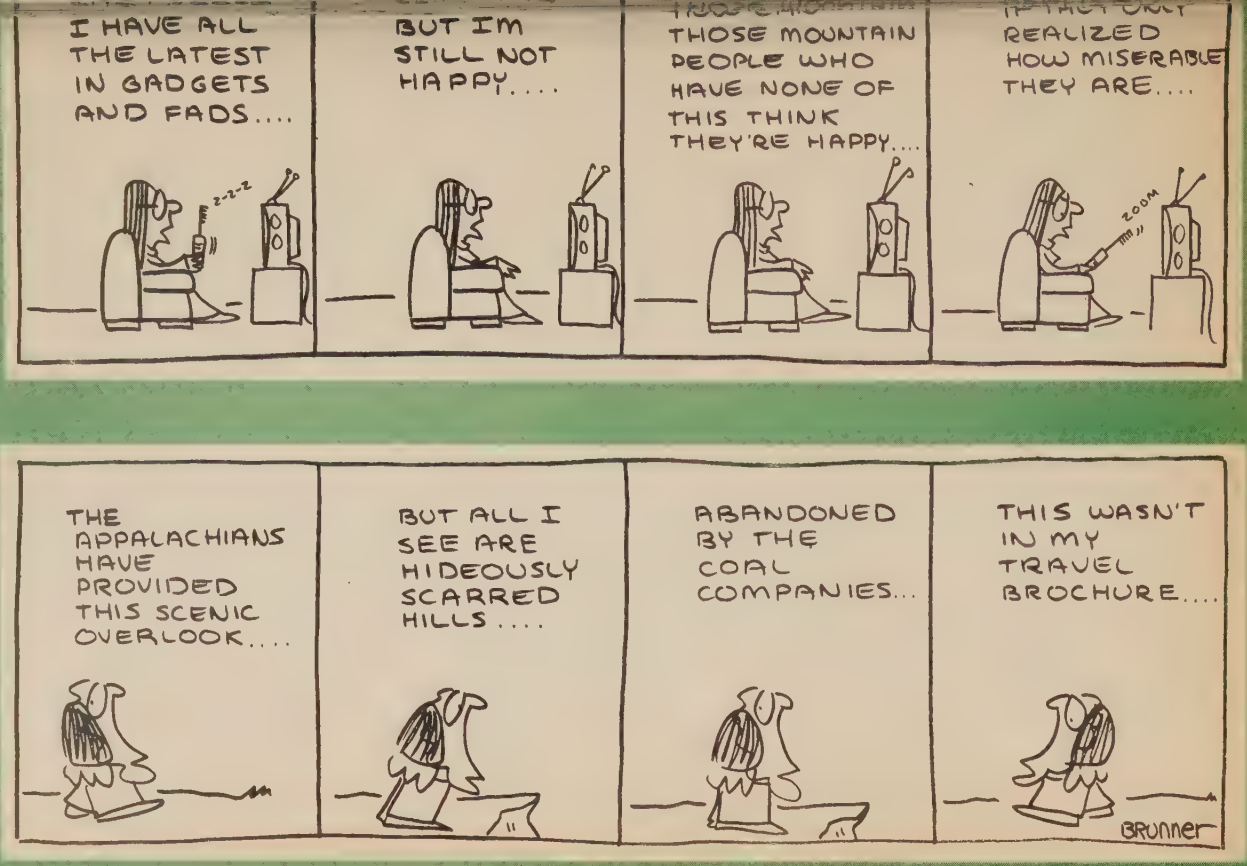
SURE I'M MATERIALISTIC
I READILY ADMIT IT
AND WHO AMONG YOU IS SO RIGHTEOUS
THAT YOU CAN CAST THE FIRST COLOR T.V.


I WANT TO SEE THE MOUNTAINS, FORESTS AND STREAMS.....
WHY SHOULD THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE BE THE ONLY ONES TO ENJOY IT....
SURE I KNOW THAT MEANS RESORTS, GAS STATIONS, SHOPPING CENTERS AND MAC DONALDS
BUT THAT GIVES THEM A CHANCE TO SEE HOW I LIVE

IT'S NOT WHO WINS THAT'S IMPORTANT
IT'S HOW YOU PLAY THE GAME
SPOKEN LIKE A TRUE LOSER

EQUATING PROGRESS WITH PROFIT....
IS DEFICIT MORALITY


CREEKS THAT PEOPLE REMEMBER DRINKING FROM....
ARE NOW POLLUTED BY SEWAGE...
AND SULFURIC ACID DRAINING FROM ABANDONED MINES....
ONE OF THE COMPANY BENEFITS....


I HAVE ALL THE LATEST IN GADGETS AND FADS....
Z-Z-Z
BUT IM STILL NOT HAPPY....
THOSE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE WHO HAVE NONE OF THIS THINK THEY'RE HAPPY....
REALIZED HOW MISERABLE THEY ARE....
ZOOM
THE APPALACHIANS HAVE PROVIDED THIS SCENIC OVERLOOK....
BUT ALL I SEE ARE HIDEOUSLY SCARRED HILLS....
ABANDONED BY THE COAL COMPANIES...
THIS WASN'T IN MY TRAVEL BROCHURE....
BRUNNER

FORUM

"MY PARENTS HELPED ME TO LIVE FOR 17 YEARS; WHY SHOULD I BE A BURDEN TO THEM ANYMORE?"

"Lots of young people care and want to do something about the problems they see around them, but they feel they don't have any tools to work with." At 24, Debbie Edwards is a young Appalachian, with roots in West Virginia, who has already found and used a number o "tools"—campaigned for the suc cessful election of a local Congress man, organized youth for a blac lung group, worked on an Appala chian monthly newspaper, did titl searches for a lawyer, and as Baptist worked on the Episcopalia staff of the Youth Area of Concer of the Appalachian People's Servic Organization.

"Lots of fellows go to work in th mines because it's the only means o survival," reports Debbie. "Lots o young women go to work in sewin factories because they can't affor to go to college, or even to finis high school, because their parent are so poor."

Using her own life as an exampl Debbie notes, "For me to go t college meant taking out lots o loans and this seemed to me to be a extra burden for my parents. An there are other young people wh feel the same way. They feel, 'M parents have helped me to live fo the last 17 years; why should I be burden to them anymore?' So lots o young people go to work to suppo

themselves and their families.

"In a way, it sounds depressing, but, at the same time, it's simply evidence of one of the strongest characteristics of an Appalachian—that drive for independence."

But it's also an example of close family ties. Debbie points out how strip-mining companies often exploit such family ties by hiring a young member of an influential family, thus silencing the opposition of that family because they would not threaten the job of a member of their own family.

"I'VE DREAMED OF STARTING A BROWN LUNG CLINIC IN THE WESTERN PART OF OUR STATE."

"I always wanted to be a doctor but half of my freshman class at college wants to be a doctor, too, so I don't know how that's going to work out," smiles Patty Dilley, 19, of Conover, N.C. She's a student at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

"I'd like to do work in occupational health, especially with brown lung," continues Patty. "Not much is know about brown lung and specialists are needed in this field. It's a disease among the cotton and textile mill workers. I've often dreamed of starting a brown lung clinic in the western part of the state where there is no such clinic."

What is brown lung?

"It's the cotton lint dust from working and weaving the cotton that collects in the air and is breathed into the lungs," explains Patty. "My aunt works in a mill and she said sometimes when the sun shines through the window, the air is so thick with lint it looks like a fog in there. Like black lung is coal dust collecting, brown lung is the lint dust collecting in the lungs of the workers."

There's no drug that can help, says Patty. Sometimes by therapy the lumps of lint can be coughed up and driven out.

Is there no prevention?

"The plants could provide better ventilation systems that would filter the air," Patty responds. "But since none of the mills are unionized, it's difficult to get the companies to do anything about it."

"IT'S NOT JUST THE POOR WHO ARE LONELY, BUT ALSO THOSE WITH ADEQUATE INCOME."

"The most stunning realization for me was the fact that I came 600 miles from Connecticut to Appalachia to find out there are lonely people in this world," confesses Bob Ely, a worker at the Highland Education Project in Northfolk, W. Va. "It was an eye-opener."

Bob and his wife, Ann, met and were married while on the staff there. One of the many jobs they do is visiting people who live alone in the hollers and in the towns in the neighboring area.

"Mainly, we don't do much talking," observes Ann. "We just sit and listen, because they just need someone to talk to. It seems to help them a lot. It brightens their day when someone bothers to stop by."

"And it's not just the poor who are lonely," Bob points out. "A lot of people with adequate—or more-than-adequate—income are lonely. And they're right in your own hometown, as well as in West Virginia."

Besides visiting the lonely, H.E.P. staff members, under the direction of Hugh Cuthbertson, do many service and educational programs, including providing transportation for the elderly, running the Good Samaritan Clothing Center, and conducting work-learn summer experiences for outsiders who come

in to do needed repair work and get to know a bit about Appalachia.

Ann herself is also an "outsider." She's from near Baltimore. "I guess I, too, had to get away from people I knew at home before I was able to find out that I could help others."

"SOME WOMEN DON'T SEE A DOCTOR UNTIL THEY APPEAR AT THE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM FOR THE DELIVERY."

"One of the major problems of women in Appalachia is employment," reports June Rosten, staff member of the Southern Appalachian Ministry and probably the only woman who is trying to be in touch with women's affairs over the entire Appalachian region. "Jobs for women are few and the ones they do get are menial and very low-paying.

"Another problem among women is pre-natal and day care services," June continues. "In some mountain counties, women have no pre-natal care. Either it's very expensive or there's nothing available. A good portion of the women who get pregnant never see a doctor until the seventh or eighth month, or not even until they walk into the emergency room at the hospital for delivery."

One report says that in 70 Appalachian counties the infant mortality rate is 28 deaths per 1000 live births, while the national rate is 18.5 deaths.

"Health care in this region is pitiful," she says. "There are some rural counties that have one or no doctor. We're trying to encourage community clinics operated by the people, but it's hard getting money, doctors, and nurse practitioners.

"Where they are working, the mountain clinics are emphasizing preventive kind of medicine as opposed to emergency treatment. It's certainly more economical for people in the long run if they can get medical services at reasonable rates.

"But we have to fight the medical establishment all the way, especially those doctors who enjoy a certain style of life and who feel such clinics compete with their business."

"NOBODY CHOSE TO LEAVE THE MOUNTAINS; THE DECISION DEPENDS ON OUTSIDE FORCES."

"Young people here go through two years of a technical school or a community college and then discover that the jobs they've been trained to do mean that they have to move out of the mountains to urban areas," comments Bill Troy of the staff of the Southern Appalachian Ministry in Higher Education (S.A.M.), headquartered in Knoxville, Tenn. "If you're committed, as we are, to trying to build communities here with some vestige of self-determination where people can stay at home and work at things they love to do, then the net effect of that kind of higher education is just to tear open the social fabric and encourage people to leave home and never come back."

And S.A.M. staff members know what they're talking about, because both Bill and Jim Sessions have attended community colleges to find out for themselves. In addition to keeping in touch with the 30 technical schools and community colleges within a 150-mile radius of Knoxville, Bill and Jim and June Rosten (see page 79) act as allies and catalysts to other Appalachian groups concerning such issues as health care, housing, labor organizing, land and natural resources, economic development, civil rights, minorities, Appalachian culture, and educational resources.

"Mountain people are no better and no worse than anybody else," Bill observes. "It's just that the kind of life that has developed in the mountains really puts a premium on that kind of closeness to the land and on the valuing of your neighbors and your family. And these people have made their own culture. That's a good thing for people to do rather than plug into a transistor radio all day. They like to live at a pace that really is much more human than what people in urban areas experience daily."

Then why do they leave the mountains?

"Nobody chose to leave the mountains," Bill affirms. "Studies prove this and experience shows they return as soon as they can.

They leave because Appalachia has become an internal colony of the U.S. and the people's ability to make a living here has depended not on themselves but on outside economic forces. They have no choice, particularly in the coal regions. Coal is a boom-or-bust business. When it's bust time, people have to eat. So they go elsewhere for work until it booms again."

Have the unions helped?

"If the United Mine Workers of America wasn't there," Bill responds, "there's no telling what would happen to the people. It's got a lot of problems, but it's one of the strongest unions in the U.S. To the average person in the coal country, the UMWA is like a shadow government there."

What's the role of Appalachia in the national panic on energy?

"First of all, there is no justification for strip-mining," Bill says firmly. "Strip-mining is a get-rich-quick scheme that can only mine something like three percent of the proven coal resources in this country.

"Secondly, we think that safe deep-mining is the best short- and long-term answer to the energy problem in our country. European countries have safe deep mines that are economical. That could be done here, too. But U.S. energy corporations don't want to do it and the people in Washington don't want to push them to do it.

"At the present rate of consumption, there are 600 to 700 years of coal in the ground in the U.S. and three-fourths of that is in Appalachia. Now that's plenty of time to develop some other energy sources such as solar power, diversified used of wind, etc. We're for the government taking whatever steps are necessary to make sure that that happens.

Why do people make fun of the hillbilly?

"The hillbilly image was never true," concludes Bill. "The hillbilly image was a kind of paternalistic image that caused people to look down on folks who were not inferior to them but just different and whose values now are being looked at with some yearning by people who have begun to sense the limitations of their own way of life.

"In the second place, the old image of Appalachia is not nearly as true in and of itself as it once was. The mountains are really changing. The whole South is changing into a much more technological, industralized kind of place.

"Therefore, we feel a big question is whether the values that people had in the days when this was just a rural paradise can move through in organized ways the onslaught of technology in order to find new ways and new forms of using technology and all that comes with mass America so that we get something better out of it in Appalachia."

"IT'S LIKE SLAVE LABOR—YOU WORK HARD FOR LITTLE PAY, AND THE TOURISTS TREAT YOU LIKE DIRT."

"If you're treated like dirt, how can you have any pride in your work?" asks Sue Jordan, a young chambermaid in a Pocono motel. The Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania are part of Appalachia. And Sue, 17, of Stroudsburg, Pa., feels that tourism is that area's biggest problem for the people who live there.

Speaking of her summer experiences, Sue observes, "I wasn't afraid of hard work, or of dirty work either, because somebody has to clean up, but it was because these tourists would be so totally inconsiderate of those of us who did clean up after them that my people felt trodden upon—lacking in dignity.

"I found that most of the people I worked with had been doing this kind of work all their lives and probably would for the rest of their lives, because it's the only income they can get—they don't know anything else. It was like slave labor. You aren't paid very much for the hard work you do.

"It's because of the attitude of the outsiders who come to the resorts. That's why my people are cool. They see what newcomers can do to their personal dignity and to their land. It's a shame, because I know that my people could be very friendly and warm."

What can be done?

"Just sitting down with people my own age and talking about it is important," replies Sue. "Maybe my people can't do anything now, but when the younger ones get into a position when they're older and might have power, maybe they'll remember something about what we said and they'll have a little bit more compassion for people who have less than they do."

"FARMERS SUFFER FINANCIALLY WHEN NEW RESORTS FORCE UP THE PRICE OF LAND AND THE TAX BASE."

I'm not sure I can survive here as a farmer," says Jim Tester, 20, who owns a six-acre farm in western North Carolina. Son of a minister, Jim has his eye on seminary as an active alternative, "but I need a college degree first." So he's going to school part-time. "But I'd rather stay on my land."

What's Jim's analysis?

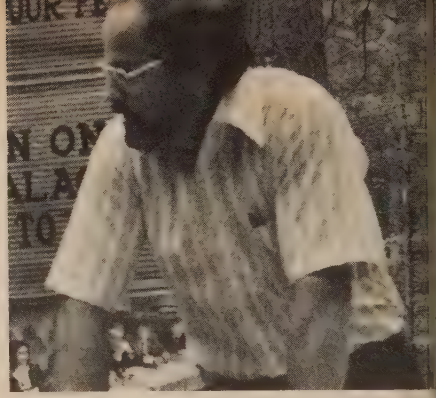
"The biggest problem we face here is resort development. First of all, the high-income people who are coming in see us as cheap labor. What's building up is a distinct line between upper and lower class. The upper class are here to have fun and the lower class are here to serve the upper class. Generally it's outsider versus the Appalachian. We're trying to organize to change that stereotype.

"A second thing that's happening is that small farmers are slowly but surely being pushed out of existence because they can't afford to farm their land. The resorts come in and drive up the prices of land as well as the tax base, and the farmers can't afford to stay. And if they have children, they can't afford to stay here either. So you have a general migration out of these mountains here of the younger people.

"Our major alternatives for survival," says Jim, "are trying new methods of growing crops and forming co-ops to extend the area where we distribute our products in order to reach more markets."

But don't resort areas bring in new jobs? Jim smiles. "What type of jobs? And for how long? Maybe I'm an idealist, but having a job is not nearly as important to me as what type of job it is. At this point, I'm not willing to do something that's against my values."

"PROFIT WITHIN REASON IS RIGHT; PROFIT AT THE EXPENSE OF THE PEOPLE AND THEIR LAND IS WRONG."



"The energy crisis should be the occasion for us to take a very hard look at our life style as a nation and at the future of how we want the earth to be," counsels the Rev. John McBride, interim coordinator of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia (C.O.R.A.).

"Within such a perspective, we can then consider the priorities of such things as strip-mining, nuclear power, and energy development of all kinds. That's why I feel that strip-mining is not going to end the energy problem. That's why I'm also concerned that, as we develop alternatives to coal, such as nuclear energy, we don't do a hurried crash program, without safety being given serious consideration."

He is especially concerned about the latter since Oak Ridge, Tenn., is the proposed energy capital of the world—where every model of energy development is to be located. He urges more funding for research and development for solar and hydro energy.

C.O.R.A. is a coalition of the 17 largest religious bodies in Appalachia and ten state councils of churches. Even though many Appalachians are members of small, independent, conservative churches, Mr. McBride notes that "there are more than six million of the 18 million people of the region who are members of the mainline denominations."

In response to those who defend strip-mining and other developments in Appalachia by pointing out the financial gains for the region, Mr. McBride says, "Money isn't everything. Yes, money is needed in the region but, for example, strip-mining puts money primarily in the hands of those who already have something going for them. It's not helping the poor. It might help the few who drive the trucks and the bulldozers. But the social costs of strip-mining coal far outweigh the value that's returned to the community in terms of dollars.

"One real issue is that so much of the mineral being mined is not being taxed. The schools are poor, the roads are poor, the people are poor, and to a large extent it's because there is no tax base on the

minerals and on the land which are owned by outside individuals and corporations. Wages do not build schools, roads, sewer systems, health clinics, etc. Usually those are built with tax money.

"That's one reason there's poverty in Appalachia. The people are powerless to 'participate in the decision-making processes which affect their own lives.

"Profit within reason is right," Mr. McBride continues. "Growth and development is O.K. But profit at the expense of the people and their land is wrong. I know that the profit conglomerates are going to continue in Appalachia because that's where the field is ripe for them. But we're saying it's wrong if it exploits the Appalachian people.

"There is no particular virtue in being Appalachian, for the same sins of the non-Appalachian to a large extent involve the Appalachian. But the dividing line, as far as we're concerned, is that people do have certain rights and those rights are to their land and to their way of life as long as they want to cooperate, work together, and build their communities. We think they have a right to do that. We think that those who simply have money and power should not be allowed to come in and destroy what these people feel is important, all in the name of free enterprise."

What can people outside Appalachia do about all these problems?

"First, we've got to evaluate the whole consumptive kind of life style in which we spend more and more to such as extreme, even to the obscene, in a circle of planned obsolescence. We seem to think that we must create something new and wear it out as quickly as possible so we can find something new again. This is at the heart of our problem.

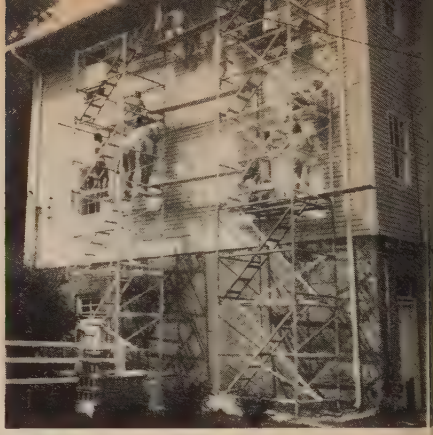
"Secondly, we need to press for changes in legislation, especially with energy and with land use. For example, in eastern Kentucky, the right of the mineral owner has precedence over the right of the surface owner, so that a mine owner can remove a man's house to get the minerals out from under the man's house without asking permission, and the owner of the house has no legal recourse whatsoever."

Third, church people should support the 32 projects of C.O.R.A. in Appalachia amounting to about $400,000 this year. If you want to know what these projects are, contact C.O.R.A., 864 Weisgarber Road, N.W., Knoxville, Tenn. 37919.

Fourth, you can help mobilize resources and enlist volunteers who really have something to offer. "We want good people in the region to help, but they have to be good for something, especially those with technical skills."

Finally, keep yourself informed about Appalachia. Contact your church, your legislators, decision-makers, and people involved in Appalachia. □

ACTION



Workcampers painting an academy building at Hazel Green, Ky.

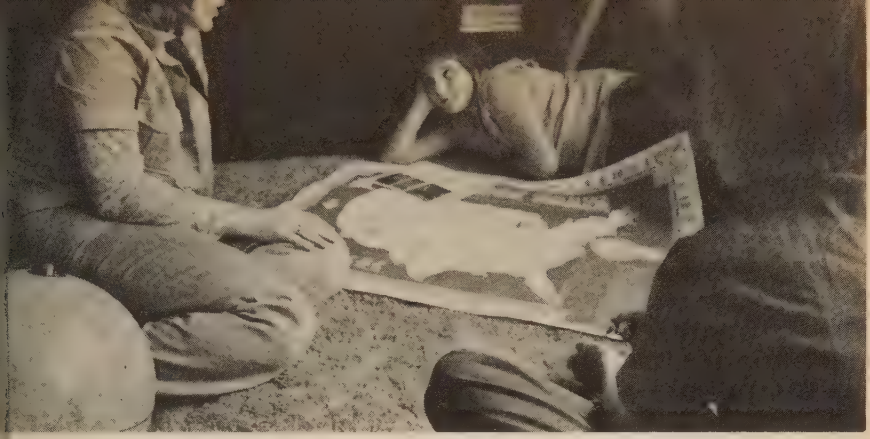
WHAT IS BEING DONE AND WHAT YOU CAN DO

There's a stirring in Appalachia. The people themselves are organizing their own groups to provide housing, health care, education, citizen action, human and economic development, occupational safety, co-ops, legal counsel, etc. Instead of letting outside forces control their destiny, the people are fighting for their rights in the courts, in the legislature, and through unions. Projects of self-help and self-determination are growing. There's a spirit of community economic development. Advocates for their causes come from churches, private groups, and government. And more information about Appalachia is coming from the Appalachians and not from media sensationalists and institutional propagandists.

For a more complete list of what's happening in Appalachia, use the resources listed on page 89. But the following are a few samples:

- MOUNTAIN MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE is an ecumencial effort to teach local folks from Central Appalachia the skills they need to operate their own community-owned and community-controlled businesses, such as community gardens, transportation, craft marketing and consumer cooperatives. The director of MMI is Fr. John S. Rausch, St. Therese Catholic Church, P.O. Box 56, St. Paul, Va. 24283.

- HAZEL GREEN ACADEMY has been ministering to youth in eastern Kentucky for 96 years.



eaching social studies in students' home in Plateau Home-School.

perated as a mission center by the isciples of Christ, it offers an credited high school curriculum, us training to its students and to rwnspeople in pottery-making, eaving, woodcrafts, and ndlemaking. No student is turned way for lack of funds. In the mmer, the academy sponsors a ries of volunteer work camps for outh from all over the country. rite: Hazel Green Academy, azel Green, Ky. 41332.

SOUTHERN PRISON INISTRY wants to arouse ncern for the plight of prisoners the South, including Appalachia. ney believe that the best way r people to know about prisoners human beings is to visit one. And important fact to remember is at most prisoners are poor and eir poverty situation is what leads em to prison, not whether they are black or white, urban or rural. For more facts, write: Southern Prison Ministry, P.O. Box 12044, Nashville, Tenn. 37212.

• RIVENDELL HOUSE youth alternatives center is a place where young people in Blacksburg, Va., can get together for recreation, for educational experiences, and for getting to know kids of diverse backgrounds—socially and economically. In an atmosphere of trust, youth gain a better sense of self and where they're going in life. Write: Dave Allen, 202 E. Roanoke St., Blacksburg, Va. 24060.

• KENTUCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION aims to provide better housing for low-income families in southeast Kentucky. In three years, KMHDC has built 30 new homes and repaired about 300

Kentucky Mountain Housing workers build new home for low-income family.

homes. Over 500 volunteers worked this past summer in the home repair projects. Write: Rev. M. Dwayne Yost, P.O. Box 431, Manchester, Ky. 40962.

• MORGAN-SCOTT PROJECT for Cooperative Christian Concerns has United Presbyterians, Methodists, United Church of Christ, and Roman Catholics within a two-county area to provide new medical clinics, recreational programs, special education and child care programs, community development, home mission work, and a legal team. Because over half of their children do not complete high school, the Plateau Home-School resulted. It accepts students with learning problems and then, with individualized teaching methods, tries to help them achieve their grade level and return to public school. Write: Rev. R. A. Butziger, P.O. Box 8, Deer Lod Tenn. 37726.

• VALLE CRUCIS SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM gives teenagers from other parts of th country a chance to spend two months in western North Caroli doing repairs on the old Mission House at the Valle Crucis Missi School or working on neighbori farms, learning mountain crafts, getting to know more about the problems and people of Appalachia, and building a close knit community among the you participants.

• OPERATION MATCH publishes the Appalachian Hand Craft Catalog in an effort to expa the crafts market for mountain craftspersons. Write: Chuck Hall Central Pa. Village Crafts, Inc., P.O. Box 85, Boalsburg, Pa. 168

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

BOOKS

- THE APPALACHIANS by Maurice Brooks (Houghton Mifflin Co., The Riverside Press).
- CHILDREN OF CRISIS by Robert Cole (Little Brown). Vol. I—*The South Goes North;* Vol. II—*Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers.*
- THE FOXFIRE BOOK edited by Eliot Wigginton (Anchor Books, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1972). *Foxfire 2* (1973).
- MY LAND IS DYING by Harry Caudill (Dutton Press).
- NIGHT COMES TO THE CUMBERLANDS by Harry Caudill (Little Brown).
- GOD'S BACKYARD by James and Georgetta Welsh (Appalachian People's Service Organization).

RESOURCE GUIDE

- APPALACHIAN ISSUES AND RESOURCES is the latest, most complete guide to Appalachia. It deals briefly with each of the major issues and includes an index of resources. The price is $2.50 each, plus 20 cents for handling and postage for one copy and ten cents for each additional copy. Write: Southern Appalachian Ministry in Higher Education, 1538 Highland Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. 37916.

ORGANIZATIONS

- APPALACHIAN PEOPLE'S SERVICE ORGANIZATION (APSO), Box 1007, Blacksburg, Va. 24060.
- APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC), 1666 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20235.
- BLACK LUNG ASSOCIATION, 1222 Washington St. East, Charleston, W. Va.
- CATHOLIC COMMITTEE OF APPALACHIA, 31-A South Third Ave., Prestonsburg, Ky.
- COMMISSION ON RELIGION IN APPALACHIA (CORA), 864 Weisgarber Rd., Knoxville, Tenn. 37919.
- COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS, Drawer N, Clintwood, Va. 24228.
- HIGHLANDER CENTER, Box 245 A, Rt. 3, New Market, Tenn. 37820.
- HUMAN ECONOMIC APPALACHIAN DEVELOPMENT CORP. (Head), Box 68, Berea, Ky. 40403.
- SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN MINISTRY IN HIGHER EDUCATION (SAM), 1538 Highland Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. 37916.
- TVA INFORMATION OFFICE, 333 New Sprankle Bldg., Knoxville, Tenn.
- UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA, 900 Fifteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

PERIODICALS

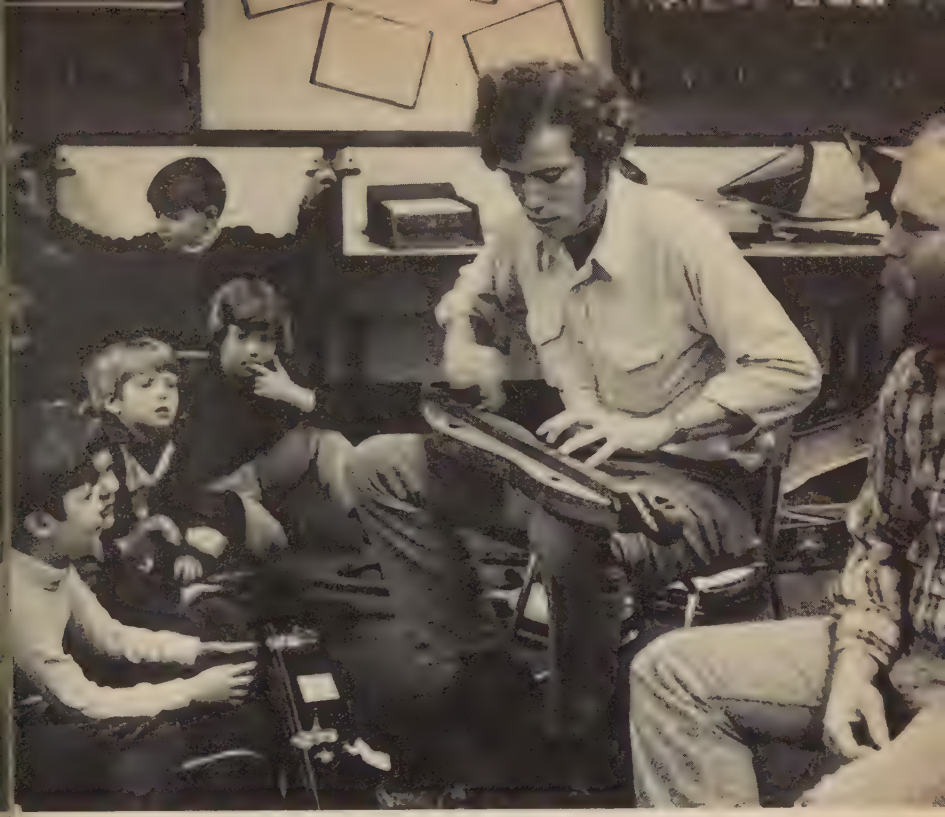
- APPALACHIA (ARC), 166 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C., 20235.
- FOXFIRE, Rabun Gap, Ga. 30568.
- THE MOUNTAIN EAGLE, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858.
- MOUNTAIN LIFE AND WORK, The Magazine of the Appalachian South, Drawer N, Clintwood, Va. 24228.
- MOUNTAIN REVIEW, Box 743 A, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858.
- THE PLOW, The Monthly Magazine for Mountain People, P.O. Box 1222, Abingdon, Va. 24210.
- SAM Newsletter, 1538 Highland Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. 37916.
- UMWA JOURNAL, 900 Fifteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

APPALSHOP: MOUNTAIN MEDIA CENTER

BY CALDER SMOOT

Growing up in Appalachia isn't always easy for a teenager. For many, it means making a hard choice between staying at home and working in the coal mines, or leaving family and friends and familiar places for an uncertain life in the city. But, for more than 35 young people, a new alternative has opened up—becoming mountain media people who are dedicated to preserving mountain culture on film, with music, drama, writing and photography.

It all started in a tiny Whitesburg, Ky., storefront in 1969. The Community Film Workshop Council, supported by the Office of Economic Opportunity and the American Film Institute, gave Bill Richardson, a Yale architecture graduate, a grant to begin a



n McCutcheon, recording artist for June Appal Records, entertains a group of children.

mmunity-based film workshop rst known as The Appalachian lm Workshop, now Appalshop). he intention was to train local ople in the skills of film produc- n. Richardson had come to the untains to design low-cost hous- g, but soon decided that film and deo were more powerful tools of mmunity development.

Interest in the workshop grew d a group of students from the high school began making video-tapes of the local basketball games. A stock car driver, Dave Adams, retired from driving to make a film about races at the Mountain Motor Speedway. He's been working on films ever since! Frank Majority initiated a film about a mountain-

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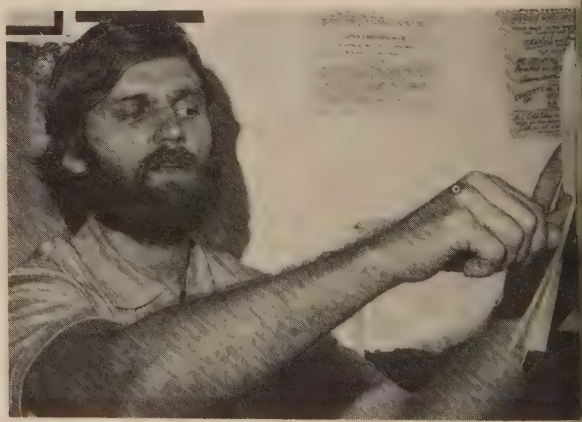
Calder Smoot is a free-lance writer from Whitesburg, Ky., who is associated with Appalshop.



Bill Richardson, right, started Appalshop, which has now grown to include the group shown above outside their Whitesburg headquarters.

style hog butcher, Woodrow Cornett, whose approach has been said to be "so brisk and casually informative that you're likely to find a squeamish reaction turning into an admiring one." This film helped people recognize the power of film to document the richness of everyday mountain culture. And the possibility of a truly community-oriented media workshop was beginning to unfold.

The next break was a contract t produce a 60-second spot fo television promotion of the Appala chian Adult Basic Education pro ject. With this job, the shop coul begin to pay salaries, establishing firmer base for the future.

The following summer was prolific one with the production o three documentary films: "Whites burg Epic"—filmed interviews o the streets of Whitesburg abou

THE VITALITY OF APPALSHOP FILMS COMES FROM PEOPLE USING MEDIA TOOLS TO TELL THEIR OWN STORY

urrent issues; "UMWA 1970: A ouse Divided"—a portrait of ony Boyle and The United Mine orkers Union; and "Judge Woot- n and Coon-on-a-Log"—a light ocumentary of a local custom of mpeting dogs against each other knocking a raccoon off a log into e water.

Several young people joined ppalshop out of their concern out the disappearance of many of e local customs and traditions. heir desire was to show the timacy of living in the mountains, e music, the crafts, the farms, the al mines and the affairs of veryday plain living, and they eveloped the skills to exhibit that ncern through film. Herb E. mith did "In Ya Blood," a story out the influence of coal in the ountains and the decision be- veen staying home and working in e mines, or leaving and working in e city, or going to college.

Ben Zickafoose filmed "Coal iner: Frank Jackson"—an inter- ew with a coal miner and his oughts on mining, the companies, e unions and the early days of coal ining. At one point in the film, Jackson says, "Used to be before the unions got in, coal companies didn't care as much for a man as they did a mule, 'If a mule got killed,' they said, 'we'll have to buy another mule,' and if a man got killed, 'We can just hire another man'."

Appalshop has a strong commitment to train local young people in useful media skills to record their cultural heritage, as well as to counteract the influences threating to destroy it. Funding was received from the National Endowment for the Humanities to further this purpose. The result has been a series of color films exploring such aspects of mountain life as folk medicine, midwifery, cockfighting, moonshining, old-time religion, a one-room schoolhouse and various kinds of music and crafts. Everyone involved decided on the subjects. Shooting and editing were done by both students and staff members. The common goals of teaching, learning and growing as filmmakers, and increased appreciation of mountain heritage brought about production of sensitive, quality films about previously undocumented aspects of Appalachian life.

One of the reasons for the intimacy and vitality of Appalshop films is the result of putting media tools into the hands of people from the mountains to tell their own story. New York or California productions tend to be exploitative and destructive; and "in depth"

documentaries typically result from a two or three day trip into the area by a film crew.

Appalshop Productions is the professional film production phase of Appalshop, engaged in creating independent films and contract work. The first professional film, "Appalachian Genesis," was a color half-hour film on mountain young people, done for the Appalachian Regional Commission. Since that time, Appalshop has produced independent films on the coal culture and coal industry; "Strip-mining in Appalachia," "Buffalo Creek Flood: An Act of Man!," "Nimrod Workman: To Fit My Own Category," craft films such as "Quilting Women," "Mountain Dulcimer," old-time grist mills, story-telling, mountain music and more.

The Appalshop Film Library has grown to 27 productions and a 90-minute special, "The Appalshop Show," to be aired over the Public Broadcast System this fall. Many schools, colleges, churches, and community groups show the Appalshop films as well as museums and educational seminars. And the films have received excellent reviews in major publications such as *Newsweek, The Washington Post, The Washington Star-News,* and others. But the enthusiasm, excitement and creativity generated by the Appalshop films have had other spinoffs.

Mountain Review, a quarterly magazine, was first conceived to showcase the works of local writers

"WE FELT THAT FILM AND VIDEO WERE POWERFUL TOOLS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, SO WE STARTED APPALSHOP."

and photographers. Through stories, poetry, interviews and profiles, the magazine has preserved much of the mountain culture, and was voted best professional magazine in Kentucky in 1975, by the Kentucky Arts Commission.

The Mountain Photography Workshop gives lessons to beginning and advanced photographers in the community and has begun an archival project to document the heritage of the region.

June Appal Records began with an interest in recording the local traditional music and instruments. A professional studio has been built in "The Loft," a warehouse converted to house the Appalshop studios, workshops and related projects. June Appal Records is now producing high-quality albums of mountain music and folk tales.

And "The Roadside Theatre" group started as an actor's workshop, and now performs local stories and tales for schools, churches and community centers, some of which are known as "Jack Tales"—stories of which "Jack and the Beanstalk" is one. The inter-

ng people are documenting mountain culture on film to help transmit and preserve it.

aving of storytelling and acting lects the tradition of passing tales m one generation to the next.

For this dedicated group of ng people, their interest in serving their culture and preting the issues of their land has them into the powerful area of mmunication. Of their work, hur Penn (director of "Bonnie l Clyde") says, "Theirs is the st alive use of film and videotape I know. So often people in Appalachia have an air of obtained resignation, but these kids are resisting that. The way they make films about the place they live in is a part of what writing novels was about in days past." □

The Appalshop film brochure, *Appalbrochure,* is available from Appalshop Inc., P.O. Box 743, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858.

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